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IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

OF

LITERARY MEN AND STATESMEN

BY

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, ESQ.

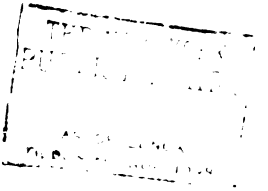
THE SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

THE SECOND VOLUME

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1826.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

TO

GENERAL ESPOZ Y MINA.

SIR,

I INSCRIBE with your illustrious name the second volume of these dialogues, not because, of all the generals who have appeared in our age, you have displayed the greatest genius, the greatest constancy, and, what is equally rare, the greatest contempt of pleasure and titles and wealth and offices, but because your energies have been all exerted, under severe and unremitting adversity, in defence of law and civilization. Neither of these can exist in that country where any one is above them, and can dictate through any organ, how far they shall go, when they shall

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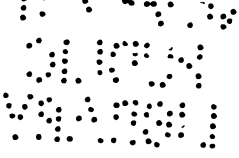
speak, on whom they shall act feebly, on whom strongly. All the nations of Europe are in this condition, even those few the forms of whose government bear the image and superscription of Freedom. Turn your eyes upon the only republic (for such it is still called) now left in this quarter of the globe, and where will you find readier slaves to execute the mandates of Despotism? All conquerors and oppressors have imposed an oligarchy, where it was possible, some under one name, some under another: such was imposed by Sparta on the Athenians, such upon the Swiss, as now upon the Spaniards, by France. Switzerland, the asylum once of the persecuted, is hence become a mere porter's lodge to the great prison-house, Europe. Law and Religion are the watch-words! I am not in a temper for irony, nor could you bear it ... but what is the reason, to speak gravely, why religion and law are in a

worse condition now, than they were seventeen centuries ago, while every other part of human knowledge has been so much improved? It is because the two greatest classes of men, two entire professions, and governments, altogether, such as they are constituted, are interested in maintaining their abuses, and because the sceptre is rather the prop of weakness than the symbol of authority. Hence the cant to keep the child quiet, and the indulgence to let him grasp and beslaver and break in pieces what is not his.

Every state, however small, contains more people than the wisest and most virtuous prince can render happy; why then want more? O! but making them happy is quite another thing: subjects are to give happiness as a tribute, and to receive it as a gratuity...If few subjects bring anxiety, many will bring more: if neither the fewer nor the numerous bring any,

then the worth of them can be but small to the proprietor: his want therefor is childish, and should be corrected and coerced like other childish wants.

You Spaniards have committed two great errors: the first, in not removing to Cuba six or seven hundred known and proven traitors, condemning to the scaffold three or four heads of the most eminent; the second, in not drawing closer the ties of affinity and commerce with Columbia, with a full acknowledgement of her independence. The former of these two duties can alone be questioned. Remove the case out of Spain into Rome, and ask yourself whether, if Lepidus had been crushed while he could be, Rome would not have been saved a hundred thousand of her best citizens at the expense of one among the worst. We should calculate for Humanity, and not leave the account in her hands, lest she drop it or lay it down.



The insolence of Despotism will urge her into schemes, if not subversive of her power, injurious to her quiet. The *Holy Allies* should in sound policy desire the establishment of republics in Greece, considering that country as a mere drain, whereby the ill humours of their subjects may be carried off. It should serve them as a galley of deportation, for those whose opinions are dangerous; just as America is in regard to England: and there is also this additional and paramount advantage, that, if they publish their sentiments, neither the kings nor their subjects can read them: the former then cannot be offended, nor the latter led astray.

I know not, sir, whether you are a pious man, but if you are, you will see the finger of Providence in the midst of the calamities which distract your country.

Under it there springs forth in letters of fire a warning to the nations, of whatso-

ever race, language, or rites, throughout the new world, as (from the rapid vegetation, if I may say so, of its prosperity, and from the dissimilarity in every feature to this of ours) it may now indeed be called most emphatically .. to form instantly a confederacy against external rule, against all dependence and usurpation, against institutions not founded upon that equable, sound, beneficent system, to which the better energies of Man, the sterner virtues, the milder charities, the comforts and satisfactions of life, its regulated and right affections, the useful arts, the ennobling sciences, with whatever is innocent in glory or exalted in pleasure, owe their origin, their protection, their progress, and their maturity. Columbia, without this invigorating shock, would have longer lain dormant or restless: Washington, to whom we principally are indebted for what little is left of freedom in the universe, would

have set before her the bright example, and Bolivar would have followed it, in vain. She will receive into her bosom those whom circumstances armed against her, rather than jealousies or animosities or antipathies; and she will number among her children, not only those who have stood forward to defend her, but those also who, confiding in her generosity, call upon her in their adversities for defence. Rising on the wreck of Spain, she will invite to her from Europe those whom wars have ruined, those whom commerce has deserted, those whom letters have cast into dungeons, those whom the ancient institutions of their country have blinded with unseasonable love, and the new ones have marked with reprobation. The veteran, still bleeding for the king who banished him, may rest his bones a little while on her fresh turf, forbidden to repose them

in death under that which covers his father's.

Your unconquerable mind, sir, cannot be deprest; mine is, and perhaps ought not to be.

God preserve you many years.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

November 1, 1823.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

IN

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CONVERSATION I.

MILTON

AND

ANDREW MARVEL.

MILTON

AND

ANDREW MARVEL.

MILTON.

FRIEND Andrew, I am glad to hear that you amuse yourself in these bad times by the composition of a comedy, and that you have several plans in readiness for others. Now let me advise you to copy the better part of what the Greeks and Romans called the *old*, and to introduce songs and music, which, suitable as they are to Tragedy, are more so to the sister Muse. Furthermore, I could desire to see a piece modeled in all parts on the Athenian scheme, with the names and characters and manners of times past. For surely you would not add to the immorality of the age, by representing any thing of the present mode upon the theatre. Although we are more abundant in follies, which rather than vices are the groundwork of comedy, we experience less disgust in touching those of other times than of our own;

and in a drama the most ancient would have the most novelty. I know that all the periods and all the nations, of the world united, have less variety of character than we find in this one city: yet, as you write to amuse yourself and a few learned friends, I am persuaded you would gladly walk out of it for once, and sit down to delineate a Momus or a Satyr, with at least as much complacency as a vulgar fopling or a partycoloured buffoon.

O Andrew! although our learning raiseth up against us many enemies among the low, and more among the powerful, yet doth it invest us with grand and glorious privileges, and conferr on us a largeness of beatitude. We enter our studies, and enjoy a society which we alone can bring together. We raise no jealousy by conversing with one in preference to another: we give no offence to the most illustrious, by questioning him as long as we will, and leaving him as abruptly. Diversity of opinion raises no tumult in our presence: each interlocutor stands before us, speaks, or is silent, and we adjourn or decide the business at our leisure. Nothing is past which we desire to be present; and we enjoy by anticipation somewhat like the power, which I imagine we shall possess hereafter, of sailing on a wish from world to world.

Surely you would turn away as far as possible from the degraded state of our country; you would select any vices and follies for description, rather than those that jostle us in our country-walks, return with us to our house-doors, and smirk on us in silks and satins at our churches.

Come, my old friend; take down your hortus siccus: the live plants you would gather do both stink and sting: prythee leave them to wither or to rot, or to be plucked and collated by more rustic hands.

MARVEL.

I entertain an utter contempt for the populace, whether in robes or tatters; whether the face be bedawbed with cinnabar, or with dirt from the allies and shops. It appears to me however, that there is as much difference between tragedy and comedy as between the heavens and the clouds, and that comedy draws its life from its mobility. We must take manners as we find them, and draw from the individual, not the species; into which fault Menander fell and seduced his followers. The characters on which he raised his glory were trivial and contemptible.

Dum fallax servus, durus pater, improba lena
Vi vent, dum meretrix blanda, Menander erit.

His wisdom towered high above them, and he cloathed with smiles what Euripides charged with

spleen. The beauty of his moral sentences was hurtful to the spirit of comedy, and I am convinced that, if we could recover his works, we should find them both less facetious and less dramatic than those of Plautus. Once, by way of experiment, I attempted to imitate his manner: I will give you a specimen: it is the best I have.

Friendship, in each successive stage of life,
As we approach him, varies to the view:
In youth he wears the face of Love himself,
Of Love without his arrows and his wings;
Soon afterwards with Bacchus and with Pan
Thou findest him, or hearest him resign
To some dog-pastor by the quiet fire,
With much good-will and jocular adieu,
His ageworn mule or brokenhearted steed.
Fly not, as thou wert wont, to his embrace,
Lest, after one long yawning gaze, he swear
Thou art the best good fellow in the world,
But he had quite forgotten thee, by Jove!
Or laughter wag his newly-bearded chin
At recollection of his childish hours.
But wouldst thou see, young man, his latest form,
When e'en this laughter, e'en this memory, fails?
Look at yon figtree statue, golden once,
As all would deem it; rottenness falls out
At every little chink the worms have made,
And if thou triest to lift it up again
It breaks upon thee: leave it, touch it not,
Its very lightness would encumber thee...
Come, thou hast seen it...tis enough...away!

MILTON.

This indeed is in the manner I would propose.

MARVEL.

Yet if it were spoken on our theatre, I should be condemned as a man ignorant of the art... and justly too... for it accords not with its complexion. Inevitable events and natural reflexions, but reflexions not exhibited before and events not expected, please me better than the most demonstrable facts, the most sober truths, the most clever improbabilities, and the most acute repartees. In comedy we should oftener raise reflexions than present them.

Now for plot.

Intricacy was always held necessary on the modern stage, and the more so when delicacy was the least. It was however so difficult to make the audience keep watch and ward for it, and to command an uninterrupted attention for five whole acts, that many of the best writers, from Terence to the present age, have combined two plots, hoping that what is twisted together will untwist together, and leaving a great deal to the goodness of Providence, and to the faith and charity of their fellow creatures.

MILTON.

True enough: your plotters bring many great

changes into many whole families, and sometimes into several and distant countries, within the day; and, what is more difficult and incredible, send off all parties well satisfied, excepting one scape-goat. For my own share, I am contented with seeing a fault wittily rebuked and checked effectually, and think *that* surprising enough, considering the time employed in doing it, without the formation of attachments, the begetting or finding of children, bickerings, buffetings, deaths, marriages, distresses, wealth again, love again, whims and suspicions, shaking heads, and shaking hands. All these things are natural, I confess it; but one would rather breathe between them, and perhaps one would think it no bad husbandry to put some of them off until another season. The combination of them, after all, marvelous as it appears, is less difficult to contrive than to credit.

MARVEL.

I have always been an idle man, and have redd or attended the greater part of the plays that are extant, and will venture to affirm that, exclusive of Shakespear's and some Spanish pieces never represented nor translated, there are barely half a dozen plots amongst them, comic and tragic. So that it is evidently a much easier matter to run over the usual variations, than to keep entirely in

another tune and to raise up no recollections. Both in tragedies and comedies the changes are pretty similar, and nearly in the same places. You perceive the turns and windings of the road a mile before you, and you know exactly the precipice down which the hero or heroine must fall: you can discover with your naked eye, who does the mischief and who affords the help; where the assassin bursts forth with the dagger, and where the old gentleman shakes the crabstick over the shoulder of his dissolute nephew.

MILTON.

I do not wish direction-posts to perplexities and intrigues: I oppose this agrarian law, this general-inclosure-act: I would not attempt to square the circle of poetry; and am avowedly a nonjuror to the doctrine of grace and predestination in the drama.

MARVEL.

In my project, one action leads to and brings about another, naturally but not necessarily. The event is the confusion of the evil-doer, whose machinations are the sole means of accomplishing what their motion seemed calculated to thwart and overthrow. No character is introduced that doth not tend toward the developement of the plot;

no one is merely prompter to a witticism, or master of the ceremonies to a repartee.

Characters in general are made subservient to the plot: here the plot is made subservient to the characters. All are real: I have only invited them to meet, and bestowed on them those abilities for conversation, without which a comedy might be very natural, but would not possess the nature of a comedy. I expose only what arises from the headiness of unruly passions, or is precipitated by the folly that verges upon vice. This exposure is in the corner of a room, not in the stocks nor in the marketplace. Comedy with me sits in an easy chair, as Menander is represented by the statuary: for it is as possible to be too busy on the scenic theatre as it is on the theatre of life. To those who admire the double plot and the machinery of the rope-walk, I only say, *Go to my betters whom you have so long neglected; carry off from them as much as you can bear; you are then welcome to rip up my sheet, and to sew a scene in where-ever the needle will go through: in this manner, the good may be made acceptable by the new, and the new can be no loser by the good.*

MILTON.

You say nothing about the chorus. I have in-

troduced it, you know, in my *Samson Agonistes*, and intend to bring it forward in my *Macbeth*.

MARVEL.

Dear John! thou art lucky in having escaped two Stuarts; and luckier still wilt thou be if thou escapest one Macbeth. Contend with Homer, but let Shakespear rest: drop that work; prythee drop it for ever: thou mayest appear as high as he is (for who can measure either of you?) if thou wilt only stand some way off.

In tragedy the chorusses were grave people, called upon, or ready without it, to give advice and consolation in cases of need. To set them singing and moralizing amidst the dolefullest emergencies, when the poet should be *reporting progress*, is like sticking a ballad upon a turnstile to hasten folks on. The comic poet called out his regular chorus, in imitation of the tragic, till the genius of Menander took a middle flight between Aristophanes and Euripides. Comedy had among the ancients her ovations, but not her triumphs.

MILTON.

Menander's form, which the Romans and French have imitated, pleases me less than the older. He introduced better manners, but employing no variety of verse, and indulging in few sallies of mer-

riment, I incline to believe that he more frequently instructed than entertained.

The verse itself of Aristophanes is a dance of Bacchanals: one cannot read it with composure. He had however but little true wit, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. There is abundance of ribaldry, and of that persecution by petulance which the commonalty call banter.

MARVEL.

He takes delight in mocking and ridiculing the manner of Euripides. In my opinion, if a modern may form one upon the subject, he might, with his ingenuity, have seized more points to let his satire lighten on, and have bent them to his purpose with more dexterity and address.

MILTON.

His ridicule on the poetry is misplaced, on the manners is inelegant. Euripides was not less wise than Socrates, nor less tender than Sappho. There is a tenderness which elevates the genius: there is also a tenderness which corrupts the heart. The latter, like every impurity, is easy to communicate; the former is difficult to conceive. Strong minds alone possess it; virtuous minds alone value it. I hold it abominable to turn into derision what is excellent. To render undesirable what ought to

be desired, is the most mischievous and diabolical of malice. To exhibit him as contemptible, who ought, according to the conscience of the exhibitor, to be respected and revered, is a crime the more odious, as it can be committed only by violence to his feelings, against the reclamations of Justice, and among the struggles of Virtue. And what is the tendency of this brave exploit? to cancel the richest legacy that ever was bequeathed to him, and to prove his own bastardy in relation to the most illustrious of his species. If it is disgraceful to demolish or obliterate a tombstone, over the body of the most obscure among the dead; if it is an action for which a boy would be whipt, as guilty of the worst idleness and mischief: what is it to overturn the monument that Gratitude has erected to Genius, and to break the lamp that is lighted by Devotion overagainst the image of Love? The writings of the wise are the only riches our posterity cannot squander: why depreciate them? To Antiquity again... but afar from Aristophanes.

MARVEL.

Our admiration of Antiquity is in part extraneous from her merits: yet even this part, strange as the assertion may appear, is well founded. We learn many things from the ancients which it cost

them no trouble to teach, and upon which they employed no imagination, no learning, no time. Those amongst us who have copied them, have not succeded. To produce any effect on morals or on manners, or indeed to attract any attention, which, whatever be the pretext, is the principal if not the only aim of most writers, and certainly of all the comic, we must employ the language and consult the habits of our age. We may introduce a song without retrospect to the old comedy; a moral sentence, without authority from the new. The characters, even on their improved and purified stage, were, we know, of so vulgar and uncleanly a cast, that, with all their fine reflexions, there was something like the shirt of Lazarus patched with the purple of Dives. Do not imagine I am a detracter from the glory of our teachers, from their grace, their elegance, their careful weeding away of small thoughts, that higher and more succulent might have room.

MILTON.

No, Marvel, no. Between their poetry and ours you perceive as great a difference as between a rose and a dandelion. There is, if I may express myself so, without pursuing a metaphor till it falls exhausted at my feet, a sort of refreshing odour flying off it perpetually; not enough to op-

press or to satiate; nothing is beaten or bruized; nothing smells of the stalk; the flower itself is half-concealed by the Genius of it hovering round. Write on the same principles as guided them.

MARVEL.

Yes; but I would not imitate them further. I will not be pegged down to any plot, nor follow any walk, however well rolled, where the persons of the drama cannot consistently lead the way.

MILTON.

Reasonable enough: but why should not both comedy and tragedy be sometimes so disciplined as may better fitt them for our closets? I allow that their general intention is for action: it is also the nature of odes to be accompanied by voices and instruments. I only would suggest to you, that a man of learning, with a genius suited to comedy, may as easily found it upon antiquity, as the tragedian of equal abilities his tragedy, and that the one might be made as acceptable to the study as the other to the stage. I would not hamper you with rules and precedents. Comply with no other laws or limits than such as are necessary to the action. There may be occasion for songs; and there may not: besides, a poet may be capable of producing a good comedy, who is incapable of composing a tolerable stanza; and,

on the other hand, Pindar himself might have been lost in a single scene.

MARVEL.

True: but tell me, friend John, are you really serious in your proposal of interspersing a few antiquated words, that my comedy may be acceptable to the readers of Plautus and Terence? This I hear.

MILTON.

I have, on several occasions, been a sufferer by the delivery of my sentiments to a friend. Antiquated words, used sparingly and characteristically, give often a force, and always a gravity, to compositions. It is not every composition that admits them: a comedy *may* in one character, but charily and choicely.

There is in Plautus a great fund of language and of wit: he is very far removed from our Shakespear, but resembles him more than any other of the ancients. In reading him and Terence, my delight arises not so materially from the aptitude of character and expression, as from a clear and unobstructed insight into the feelings and manners of those ancient times, and an admission into the conversations to which Scipio and Lelius attended.

You will carefully observe the proper and re-

quisite unities, not according to the wry rigour of our neighbours, who never take up an old idea without some extravagance in its application. We would not draw out a conspiracy in the presence of those who are conspired against; nor hold it needful to call a council of postilions, before we decide on the distance we may allow to our heros between the acts. Let others treat them as monkeys and parrots, loving to hear them chatter, tied by the leg. The music renders a removal of twenty or thirty miles, during the action, probable enough, unless you take out your watch, and look upon it while you are listening. In that case, altho you oblige the poet to prove the pedigree of the horses, and to bring witnesses that such horses might go thus far without drawing bit, your reasons are insufficient by fifty minutes or an hour.

The historical dramas of Shakespear should be designated by that name only, and not be called tragedies, lest persons who reflect little (and how few reflect much!) should try them by the rules of Aristoteles; which would be as absurd as to try a gem upon a touchstone. Shakespear, in these particularly, but also in the rest, can only be relished by a people which retains its feelings and character in perfection. The French, more than

any other, are transmuted by the stream that runs over them, like the baser metals. Beautiful poems, in dialogue too, may be composed on the greater part of a life, if that life be eventful, and if there be a proper choice of topics. Votivâ veluti depincta tabellâ.

No other than Shakespear hath ever yet been able to give unceasing interest to such pieces: but he has given it amply to such as understand him. Sometimes his levity is misplaced. Human life is exhibited not only in its calamities and its cares, but in the gay unguarded hours of ebullient and confident prosperity; and we are the more deeply interested in the reverses of those whose familiarity we have long enjoyed, and whose festivity we have recently partaken.

MARVEL.

Now, what think you about the number of acts?

MILTON.

There is no reason, in nature or in art, why a drama should occupy five. Be assured, my friend Andrew, the fifth-act-men will hereafter be thought as absurd as the fifth-monarchy-men. The number of acts should be optional, like the number of scenes, and the division of them should equally be subordinate to the convenience of the poet in the procession of his events. In respect to duration,

nothing is requisite or reasonable but that it should not loiter nor digress, and that it should not exhaust the patience nor disappoint the expectation of the audience. Dramatists have gone to work, in this business, with so much less of wisdom than of system, that I question, when they say a comedy or tragedy in *five acts*, whether they should not rather say in *five scenes;* whether, in fact, the scenes should not designate the divisions, and the acts the subdivisions: for, the *scene* usually changes to constitute a new *act*, and when a fresh *actor* enters we usually call it a new *scene*. I do not speculate on any one carrying the identity of place, strictly, throughout a whole performance, least of all a tragedy, unless for the purpose of ridiculing some late French critics. As a tragedy must consist of opposite counsels and unforeseen events, if the author should exhibit his whole action in one hall or chamber, he would be laughed to scorn. Comedy is not formed to astonish: she neither expects nor wishes great changes. Let her argue rarely; let her remark lightly: if she reasons too well, her audience will leave her, and reflect upon it. Those generally are the most temperate, who have large and well-stored cellars. You have every thing at home, Andrew, and need not step out of

your way. Those shew that they possess much who hold much back.

MARVEL.

Be not afraid of me: I will not push my characters forward, and make them stare most one upon another when they are best acquainted. The union of wisdom with humour is unexpected enough for me: I would rather see it than the finest piece of arras slit asunder, or the richest screen in christendom overturned; than the cleverest trick that was ever played among the scenes, or than a marriage that should surprise me like an Abyssinian's with a Laplander.

CONVERSATION II.

WASHINGTON

AND

FRANKLIN.

WASHINGTON

AND

FRANKLIN.

WASHINGTON.

WELL met again, my friend Benjamin! Never did I see you, I think, in better health: Paris does not appear to have added a single day to your age. I hope the two years you have spent there for us, were spent as pleasantly to yourself as they have been advantageously to your country.

FRANKLIN.

Pleasantly they were spent indeed; but, you may well suppose, not entirely without anxiety. I thank God however that all this is over.

WASHINGTON.

Yes, Benjamin, let us render thanks to the disposer of events, under whom, by the fortitude, the wisdom, and the endurance of our Congress, the affairs of America are brought at last to a triumphant issue.

FRANKLIN.

Do not refuse the share of merit due to yourself, which is perhaps the largest.

WASHINGTON.

I am not of that opinion: if I were, I might acknowledge it to you, although not to others. Suppose me to have made a judicious choice in my measures: the Congress then made a judicious choice in me: so that whatever praise may be allowed me, is at best but secondary.

FRANKLIN.

I do not believe that the world contains so many men who reason rightly, as New England. Serious, religious, peaceable, inflexibly just and courageous, their stores of intellect are not squandered in the regions of fancy, or in the desperate ventures of new-found and foggy metaphysics, but warehoused and kept sound at home, and ready to be brought forth in good and wholesome condition at the first demand. Their ancestors had abandoned their estates, their families, and their country, for the obtainment of peace and freedom; and they themselves were ready to traverse the vast wildernesses of an unexplored continent, rather than submitt to that moral degradation, which alone can satisfy the capriciousness of despotism. Their gravity is converted into enthu-

siasm: even those amongst them who never, in childhood itself, expressed in speech or countenance a sign of admiration, express it strongly in their old age at your exploits.

WASHINGTON.

Benjamin, one would imagine that we both had been educated in courts, and that I were a man who could give, and you a man who could ask. Prythee, my friend, be a philosopher in somewhat more than books and bottles, and, as you have learnt to manage the clouds and lightnings, try an experiment on the management of your fancies. I declare, on my conscience, I do not know what I have done extraordinary, unless we are forced to acknowledge, from the examples to which we have been accustomed, that it is extraordinary to possess power and to remain honest. I believe it may be so: but this was a matter of reflexion with me: by serving my country I gratified my heart and all its wants. Perhaps I am not so happy a creature as the fellow who smokes his pipe upon the bench at the tavern-door; but I am as happy as my slow blood allows; and I keep my store of happiness in the same temperature the whole year round, by the double casement of action and integrity.

FRANKLIN.

I do not assert that there never was a general who disposed his army in the day of battle with skill equal to yours: which, in many instances, must depend almost as much on his adversary as on himself: but I assert that no man ever displayed such intimate knowledge of his whole business, guarded so frequently and so effectually against the impending ruin of his forces, and shewed himself at once so circumspect and so daring. To have inoculated one half of your troops under the eye of the enemy.....

WASHINGTON.

Those actions are great, which require great calculation, and succede in consequence of its correctness: those alone, or nearly alone, are called so, which succede without any. I knew the supineness of the British general, his utter ignorance of his profession, his propensity to gaming, to drinking, in short to all the camp vices. I took especial care that he should be informed of my intention to attack him, on the very day when my army was, from the nature of its distemper, the most disabled. Instead of anticipating me, which this intelligence, credited as it was, would have induced a more skilful man to do, he kept his

troops unremittingly on the alert, and he himself is reported to have been sober three days together. The money which he ought to have employed in obtaining just and necessary information, he lost at cards; and when he heard that I had ventured to inoculate my army, and that the soldiers had recovered, he little imagined that half the number was at that moment under the full influence of the disease.

Attribute no little of our success to the only invariable policy of England, which is, to sweep forward to the head of all her armaments the grubs of rotten boroughs and the droppings of the gamingtable; and, Benjamin, be assured that, although men of eminent genius have been guilty of all other vices, none worthy of more than a secondary name has ever been a gamester. Either an excess of avarice, or a deficiency of what in physics is called stimulus and excitability, is the cause of it: neither of which can exist in the same bosom with genius, with patriotism, or with virtue. Clive, the best English general since Marlborough and Peterborough, was apparently an exception: but he fell not into this degrading vice, until he was removed from the sphere of exertion, until his abilities had begun to decay, and his intellect in some measure to be deranged.

FRANKLIN.

I quite agree with you in your main proposition, and see no exception to it in Clive, who, although he gained the most glorious victory that has been obtained since the battle of Poictiers, was more capable of ruining a country than of raising one. Those who record that chess was invented in the Trojan war, would have informed us if Ulysses, Agamemnon, or Diomedes, ever played at it; which however is usually done without a stake, nor can it be called in any way a game of chance. Gustavus Adolphus and Eugene of Savoy, who hold, I think I have heard you say, the most distinguished rank among the generals of modern nations, and Marlborough who united with military science an equal share of political sagacity and dexterous conciliation, and Frederic of Prussia, and Charles XII of Sweden, and William III of England, had springs and movements within themselves, which did not require to be wound up every night. They deemed it indecorous to be selvages to an ell of green cloth, and scandalous to cast upon a card what would cover a whole country with plenteousness.

Gaming is the vice of those nations which are too effeminate to be barbarous, and too depraved to be civilized, and which unite the worst qualities

of both conditions; as for example the rags and lace of Naples, its lazaroni and other titulars. The Malays, I acknowledge, are less effeminate, and in all respects less degraded, and still are gamesters: but gaming with the Malays is a substitute for beetel; the Neapolitan games on a full snuffbox. Monarchs should encourage the practice, as the Capets have done constantly: for it brings the idle and rich into their capitals, holds them from other intrigues and from more active parties, makes many powerful families dependent, and satisfies many young officers who would otherwise want employments. Republics, on the contrary, should punish the first offence with fine and imprisonment, the second with a public whipping and a year's hard labour, the third with deportation.

WASHINGTON.

As you please in monarchies and republics: but prythee say nothing of them in mixt governments: do not affront the earliest coadjutors and surest reliances of our commonwealth. The leaders of party in England are inclined to play; and what was a cartouche but yesterday will make a rouleau tomorrow.

FRANKLIN.

Fill it then with base money, or you will be overreached. They are persons of some reputation

for eloquence; but if I conducted a newspaper in that country, I should think it a wild speculation to pay the wiser of them half a crown aday for his most elaborate composition. When either shall venture to publish a history, a dialogue, or even a speech of his own, his talents will then be appreciated justly. God grant (for our differences have not yet annihilated the remembrance of our relationship) that England may never have any more painful proofs, any more lasting documents of their incapacity. Since we Americans can suffer no further from them, I speak of them with the same indifference and equanimity as if they were among the dead.

WASHINGTON.

But come, come....the war is ended, God be praised! Objections have been raised against our form of government, and assertions have been added that the republican is ill adapted to a flourishing or an extensive country. We know from the experience of Carthage and of Holland that it not only can preserve but can make a country flourishing, when Nature herself has multiplied the impediments, and when the earth and all the elements have conspired against it. Demonstration is indeed yet wanting, that a very extensive territory is best governed by its people: reason

and sound common sense are the only vouchers. Many may fancy they have an interest in seizing what is another's; but surely no man can suppose that he has any in ruining or alienating his own.

FRANKLIN.

Confederate states, under one president, will never be all at once, or indeed in great part, deprived of their freedom.

WASHINGTON.

Adventurers may aspire to the supreme power illegally; but none can expect that the majority will sacrifice their present interests to his ambition, in any confidence or hope of greater. He never will raise a standing army, who cannot point out the probable means of paying it, which no one can do here; nor will an usurper rise up any where, unless there are mines to tempt the adventurous and avaricious, or large and well-cultivated estates to parcel out, and labourers to cultivate them, or many slaves to seduce and embody, or rich treasures to confiscate, or enemies to invade whose property may be plundered.

FRANKLIN.

The objections bear much more weightily against monarchal and mixt governments: because these, in wide dominions, are always composed of parts considerably at variance in privileges and interests,

in manners and opinions, and the inhabitants of which are not unreluctant to be employed one against the other. Hence while we Americans leave our few soldiers to the states where they were levied, the kings of Europe will cautiously change the quarters of theirs, and send them into provinces as remote as possible. When they have ceased to have a home, they have ceased to have a country: for all affinities are destroyed by breaking the nearest. Thrones are constructed on the petrifaction of the human heart.

WASHINGTON.

Lawless ambition has no chance whatever of success, where there are neither great standing armies nor great national debts; (I am not speaking of usurpation but of encroachment:) where either of those exist, freedom must waste away, and perish. We are as far from this danger, as from the other.

FRANKLIN.

Dangers grow familiar and unsuspected: slight causes may produce them; even names. Suppose a man calling another his subject, and having first received from him marks of deference, and relying on his good-temper and passiveness, and exerting by degrees more and more authority over him, and leaving him at last to the care and protection of his

son or granson. We are well acquainted with the designation; but we are ignorant how deeply it cuts into the metal. After a time a shrewd jurist will instruct the subject in his duties, and give him arguments and proofs out of the name itself. What so irrefragable!

The latin language, which answers so nearly all our demands upon it from its own resources, or, not having quite wherewithal, borrows for us a trifle from the greek, neither can give us nor help us to find, directly or circuitously, a word for *subject*. *Subditus*, the term in use, is not latin in that sense, whether of the golden, the silver, or the brazen age: it means *substitute* primarily, and then *subdued* or *subjected*. Yet people own themselves to be subjects, who would be outrageous if you called them vassals; an appellation quite as noble.

Excellent pens have written, I know not from what motive, that liberty is never more perfect or more safe than under a mild monarch: History teaches us the contrary. Where princes are absolute, more tyranny is committed under the mild, than under the austere: for the latter are jealous of power, and entrust it to few; the mild delegate it inconsiderately to many: and the same easiness of temper which allows them to do so, permits

their ministers and those under them to abuse the trust with impunity. It has been said that in a democracy there are many despots, and that in a kingdom there can be one only. This is false: in a republic the tyrannical temper creates a check to itself in the very person next it: but in a monarchy all entrusted with power become tyrannical by a nod from above, whether the nod be of approbation or of drowsiness. Royalty not only is a monster of more heads, but also of more claws, and sharper. It is amusing to find us treated as visionaries. All the gravest nations have been republics, both in ancient times and in modern. The Dutch and the Venetians will always, unless an insuperable force oppresses them, aspire to the dignity of manhood; the Neapolitans and the French will dream of it and shake it off. I shall believe that a king is better than a republic, when I find that a single tooth in a head is better than a set, and that in its solitariness there is a warrant for its strength and soundness.

Many have begun to predict our *future* greatness *: in fact, no nation is ever greater than at the time when it recovers its freedom from under one

* Of the Americans in late years, Madame de Stael says, *There is a people which will one day be very great,* placing her

apparently more powerful. America will never have to make again such a struggle as she made in 1775, and never can make one so glorious. A wide territory does not constitute a great people, nor does enormous wealth, nor does excessive population. The Americans are at present as great a people as we can expect them to be in future. Can we hope that they will be more virtuous, more unanimous, more courageous, more patriotic? They may become more learned and more elegant in their manners: but these advantages are only to be purchased by paying down others equivalent. All acquisitions, to be advantageous, must have some mart and vent. Elegance grows familiar with venality. Learning may perhaps be succeded by a *church-establishment;* an institution perversive of those on which the government of America is constructed. Erudition (as we use the word) begins with societies, and ends with professions and orders. Priests and lawyers, the flies and wasps of ripe and ripening communities, may darken and disturb America. A few of these, we will allow, are necessary; many are, of all the curses that the world is subject to, the most pernicious. These guardians have been proved in

fine impressive pen on the broad rude mark of the vulgar, who measure greatness by the standard of aggression.

every country the poisoners of their wards, Law and Religion. They never let us exist long together in an equable and genial temperature: it is either at blood-heat or at zero.

WASHINGTON.

The solid sense of our people, their speculative habits, their room for enterprise around home, and their distance from Europe, ensure to them, if not a long continuance of peace, exemption from such wars as can affect in any material degree their character or their prosperity. We might have continued the hostilities, until a part or even the whole of Canada had been ceded to us. The Congress has done, what, if my opinion had been asked, I should have strongly recommended. Let Canada be ours when she is cultivated and enriched; let not the fruit be gathered prematurely; indeed let it never be plucked; let it fall when our bosom can hold it. This must happen within the century to come: for no nation is, or ever has been, so intolerably vexatious to its colonies, its dependencies, and its conquests, as the British. I have known personally several governors, many of them honest and sensible men, many of them of mild and easy character; but I never knew one, nor ever heard of any from older officers, who attempted at all to conciliate the affections, or systematically to pro-

mote the interests, of the governed. Liberality has been occasionally extended to them; but it has been the liberality of a master toward a slave, and only after grievous sufferings. Services have then been exacted, not hard perhaps in themselves, but in a manner to cancel all recollection, and deaden all sense, of kindness. What greater political, what more incorrigible moral evil! The French and Spaniards act differently: they extract advantage from their undisturbed possessions, appealing to the generosity of their children, and softening their commands by kind offices and constant attentions. Wherever a French regiment is quartered, there are balls and comedies; wherever an English, there are disturbances in the street, and duels. Give the Spaniard a bull-fight, and you may burn his father at the stake, commending him to the God of Mercy in a cassock painted with the flames of hell. The English (and we their descendents are the most deserving of the name) require but justice. Whatever comes as a favour comes as an affront. To what a pitch then must our indignation be excited, when we are not permitted even to pay that which is required of us, unless we present it with the left hand, or upon the nose, or from our knees amidst the mire! The orators of the British parliament, while they are colouring

all this insolence and injustice, keep the understanding of the people at tongue's length.

FRANKLIN.

In good truth then the separation is no narrow one. I have been present while some of them have thrown up the most chaffy stuff two hours together, and have never called for a glass of water. This is contemplated as the summit of ability, and he who is capable of performing it, is deemed capable of ruling the two hemispheres *. The rich families that govern this assembly, have made us independent; they have given us thirteen provinces, and they will people them all for us in less than fifty years. Religious and grave men, for none are graver or more religious than the beaten, are praising the loving-mercies of God, in loosening from their necks the mill-stone of America: otherwise the national debt, which has only been trebled, would have soon been quintupled. What a blessing to throw aside such an extent of coast, which of itself would have required an immense navy for its defence! No one dreams that England, in confederacy with America, would have been so strong in sailors, in ports, in naval stores, as

* Pitt may be complimented on his oratory in the words wherewith Anacreon congratulates the tettinx, ἀπαλὴς, ἄναιμ', ἄσαρκε.

to have become (I do not say with good management, I say in spite of bad) not invincible only, but invulnerable.

WASHINGTON.

If she turns her attention to the defects of her administration, in all its branches, she may recover not much less than she has lost. Look at the nations of Europe, and shew me one, despotic or free, of which so large a portion is so barbarous and wretched as the Irish. The country is more fertile than Britain; the inhabitants are healthy, strong, courageous, faithful, patriotic, and quick of apprehension. No quality is wanting, which constitutes the respectability of a state or the happiness of individuals: yet, from centuries of misrule, they are in a condition more hopeless than any other nation or tribe upon the globe, civilized or savage.

FRANKLIN.

There is only one direct way to bring them into order, and that appears so rough, that it never will be trodden. The chief misery arises from the rapacity of the gentry, as they are called, and the nobility, who, to avoid the trouble of collecting their rents from many poor tenants, and the greater of hearing their complaints, have leased their properties to what are called *middle-men*.

These harass their inferiors in the exact ratio of their industry, and drive them into desperation. Hence slovenliness and drunkenness; for the appearance of ease and comfort is an allurement to avarice. To pacify and reclame the people, all leases to middle-men must be annulled: every cultivator must have a lease for life, and (at the option of his successor) valid for as many years afterwards as will amount in the whole to twenty-one. The extent of ground should be proportionate to his family and his means. To underlet land should be punished by law as *regrating*. Authority would here be strongly exercised, not tyrannically, which never can be asserted of plans sanctioned by the representatives of a people, for the great and perpetual benefit of the many, to the small and transient inconvenience of the few. Auxiliary to this reform should be one in church-livings. They should all embrace nearly the same number of communicants. Suppose three thousand souls under each cure: a fourth part would consist of the infirm and of children not yet prepared for the reception of doctrine. The service, as formerly, should be shorter, and performed thrice each Sunday: so that all might in turn be present, and that great concourse would be avoided, which frequently is the prelude to licentiousness

and brutality. Abolishing tithes, selling the property of the crown, the church, and corporations, I would establish a fund sufficient to allow each clergyman, in addition to his house, one hundred and forty pounds annually. The catholic priest should have the same number of communicants, and should receive a gratuity of fifty pounds annually, and should also possess his parsonage-house: offerings and gifts, as at present, would accrue to him from the piety and gratitude of his parishioners. The church, as established by government, would be maintained in its supremacy, and the papal priest would be remunerated, not for his profession, but for services done toward the state, by his attention to the morals of his communicants. If the English pay forty pounds for taking up a felon, would they not willingly pay fifty for reclaiming a dozen? I would grant eight hundred pounds yearly to each protestant bishop, obliging him to constant residence in his diocese; four of these are sufficient: I would grant two thousand to one arch-bishop. The catholics should have the same number, and their stipends should be the same: for altho the priests are ignorant and vulgar men in all catholic countries, it is highly requisite for the maintenance of order, that the bishops and arch-bishop here should possess

whatever gives authority. Knowledge in some measure gives it, but splendour in a much greater. Elagabalus would attract more notice, and lead after him more followers, than Lycurgus, and not merely from the lower orders, but also from the higher.

WASHINGTON.

True enough: and indeed some of the wise become as the unwise in the enchanted chambers of Power, whose lamps make every face of the same colour. Gorgeousness melts all mankind into one inert mass, carrying off and confounding and consuming all beneath it, like a torrent of lava, bright amidst the darkness and dark again amidst the light.

FRANKLIN.

The abuses of the clergy were first exposed by the clergy, the lower assailing the higher. If something more like equality, something more near moderation, had pervaded all, fewer sects would have arisen, and those fewer less acrimonious. Dogmas turn sour upon too full stomachs, and empty ones rattle against them. Envy, which the wolves and bears are without, and the generous dog alone seems by his proximity to have caught from us, Envy, accompanying Religion, swells amid her genuflexions to the episcopal canopy, at seeing so much wealth so ill distributed. The low

cannot be leaders without a change nor without a party. Some unintelligible syllable is seized; and the vulgar are taught to believe that salvation rests upon it. Even this were little: they are instructed that salvation may be yet perhaps insecure, unless they drag others to it by the throat, and quicken their paces at the dagger's point. Popery first laid down this doctrine; the most abominable and monsterous of her tenets, and the only one that all establishments are unanimous in retaining.

WASHINGTON.

The reductions you propose would bring about another: they would remove the necessity of a standing army in that unfortunate country, and further would enable the government to establish three companies for fisheries, the herring, the cod, and the whale. The population is already too great, and is increasing, which of itself is the worst of curses, unless when high civilization regulates it; and the superflux must be diverted by colonization, or occupied on the seas by commerce. Manufactures all tend to deteriorate the species, but begin by humanizing it. Happy those countries which have occasion for no more of them than may supply the home consumption! National debts are evils, not so much because they

take away from useful and honest gains, as because they create superfluous and dishonest ones, and because, when carried as far as England would carry hers, they occasion half the children of the land to be cooped up in buildings which open into the brothel and the hospital.

In assenting to you, I interrupted your propositions; pray go on.

FRANKLIN.

I would permitt no Englishman to hold in Ireland a place of trust or profit, whether in church or state. I would conferr titles and offices on those Irish gentlemen, who resided in the country on their properties: they would in time become habituated to a regular and decorous mode of life. The landlord and clergyman would in the beginning lose something of current coin; but if you consider that their lives, houses, and effects would become safe, that provisions would be plentiful in proportion to the sacrifices they made, and that in no year would their rents and incomes fail, as they now do at least thirty in each century, you would find that their situation, like the situation of their inferiors, would be much improved.

WASHINGTON.

Many would exclame against the injustice, of

taking from one class alone a portion of its property, as insurance-money.

FRANKLIN.

Not from one alone: all property should be protected at its own cost: this is the right and the object of all governments. The insurance is two-fold; that of the private man, and that of the community: the latter is the main consideration. I perceive nothing arbitrary, nothing novel, in its principle *. If a government exerts the power of

* There is an argument which I could not attribute to Franklin, because it is derived from an authority to which he never appealed, and the words containing it are unlikely to have lain within the range of his reading. I derive it from the *Aphorisms of Confessors*, by Emanuel Sa: p. 528.

Le Pape peut revoquer la loi etablie par lui ou par predecesseur, et oster *mesme sans occasion* les effects procedens d'icelle, et le benefice valide à un chacun: car il a entiere disposition sur les benefices.

The king of England and Ireland, as head of the church, succedes by consent of Parliament to the disposal of benefices. He surely can do in his own kingdom, what the Pope can do in another's, where property is concerned. The religion of a state is established for the correction of its morals, and its morals are requisite to the maintenance of the laws. Religion then, in the view of a statesman, is only a thing that aids and assists the laws, removing from before them much of their painful duties, and lessening (if good and effectual) the number of their officers and executioners. So that in political economy there is between them a close and intimate con-

taxing one trade or profession, it does the same thing or more. Suppose it should levy a tax, of a hundred pounds, on every man who begins the business of apothecary or lawyer, is not the grievance even heavier, as pressing on those whose gains are yet uncertain and to be derived from others, than it would be if bearing upon those whose emoluments are fixt, and procede from the government which regulates and circumscribes them? But they have been accustomed, you will say, to the enjoyment of more. So much clear gain for them. I hope they may have made a liberal and wise use of the superfluity. Those who have done so, will possess minds ready to calculate justly their own lasting interests, and the interests of the community for whose benefit they have been appointed. If there is any thing the existence of which produces great and general evil, and the abolition of which will produce great and general good, in perpetuity, the government is not only authorized by right, but bound by duty, to remove it. Compensation should be made to the middle-men for all losses; it should be made

nexion, and both alike are subject to regulations in them from the same authority. The salary of a clergyman should be as much subject to the state, as the stipend of a custom-house officer and exciseman.

even to the worst; these losses may as easily be ascertained, as those occasioned to proprietors and tenants thro whose lands we open a road or a canal.

Methods, far short of what I indicate, will be adopted, and will fail. Constitutional lawyers (now England is persuaded that her judicature and her parliament contains them, and even the Irish too!) will assent that Ireland be subject to martial law, for thirty years in the century, and to little or none for the remainder, but will not assent that every thing unlawful shall be also unnecessary, and unprovoked. In consequence of which, within the life-time of some in existence, we shall have two millions of Irishmen in America, all reclamed from their ferocity, by assuaging their physical and moral wants, and addicted to industry by the undisturbed enjoyment of its sweets. Experience seems to have given no sort of information to their rulers: they profit by nothing old, they venture on nothing new.

We are informed by the scientific in chemistry, that a diamond and a stick of charcoal on the hearth are essentially of the same materials. In like manner, those among men who, to the vulgar eye, are the most dissimilar in externals, are perhaps the same or nearly so in mind and intellect;

and their difference, such as it is, is the effect of accident and fortune, of position and combination. Those who, governing the political, influence in a high degree the moral world, can perform at once what Nature is myriads of years in accomplishing: they can convert the stick of charcoal into the diamond, by the aliment and situation they allow to it. Our government will find its interest in doing so: others will pursue their old occupation, in reducing the diamond to its dark original, and exercise their divine right of keeping it unextracted.

If I were a member of the British ministry, I should think I acted wisely, not in attempting to prove that the constitution is the best in the world, but in demonstrating, if I could, the reverse. For in proportion as they labour to extoll it, in the same proportion do they oblige us to suppose them its most impudent and outrageous violators, or, at the least, ignorant of its spirit, and incapable of its application. Otherwise how could this excellent form be the parent of deformity? how could the population, where the country is so fertile and the race so industrious, contain a larger number of indigent families, and those among the most laborious and the most virtuous, than any other upon earth? Such is the beneficence of the supreme Power, unmixt evil, in its exposure to the air

and heavens, may contract or produce, by a certain stimulating agency, a somewhat of good, however scantily and slowly; but evil never flows from good unmixt. If the constitution were what it is represented, its agents could not abuse it; and if its agents could not abuse it, America would not have been, at this time, separated from England, nor would Ireland have been condemned to a massacre once at furthest in two generations; nor would the British people be more heavily taxed, in its comforts and its necessaries, than the Algerines and Turks, when its industry is so much greater, and when its territory has not been occupied, nor invaded, nor endangered, by an enemy. I suspect that its wars are systematical in their periods, however little so in their conduct: that they must recurr about every twenty years, as a new generation springs up from the aristocracy, for which all the great civil employments, however multiplied, are insufficient, and which disdains all other professions than the military and the naval.

WASHINGTON.

If all state-religions were abolished in their predominancy, the world would be quieter and better. In England the national debt would be liquidated soon, and in Ireland the public peace would be re-established. When the catholic sees the protestant

freed from the heaviest of taxations, that of paying in the clergy a body he does not appoint, a body bound like a dead weight upon him, he will presently clame a similar advantage. The sect that bears the lighter burden will become the more numerous by being the more flourishing. This alone, in my opinion, can ever give the protestants in Ireland a true, legitimate, and durable ascendency. Among our own injuries on the part of England, this never bore upon us, namely, to pay for hearing what we knew or for what we disbelieved.

FRANKLIN.

If there existed no establishment in England or in Ireland, great fears would be entertained of novel sects, and greater still of old ones; of puritanism for instance and of popery.

WASHINGTON.

Against what could puritanism act? It overthrew the established church in her state of inebriety: it kicked into the street her crosiers and mitres, and other such ensigns of barbarism and paganism and despotism. When it finds nothing to quarrel with, out of doors, it will quarrel at home.

FRANKLIN.

It grows strong by being kept in the cool, and bunged up by the ecclesiastical excise.

WASHINGTON.

Benjamin, I do not like to meddle with religions, nor indeed to talk about them. All of them appear to me inoffensive, excepting the popish, which not only would have a hand in every man's pocket, but an ear on every man's pillow. Instead of sending to a rotten old city, the most profligate and the most venal on earth, for spiritual advice and council, which always comes to you in the form of a command, and enclosing an order to pay a pretty round sum to the bearer, could not every city and every hamlet find some worthy inhabitant, capable of giving his opinion upon those slight matters, if indeed there be any such, which the disciples of Christ were unable, or inattentive, or indifferent to elucidate and explane? I see nothing worth a quarrel in them; and certainly there is nothing which the blessed author of our religion would recommend us to quarrel and fight about. If there were no hierarchy in England and Ireland, the people of both countries would be more brotherly and contented. They would mind their own business, and not the business of those who fare sumptuously on their credulity, and ride in rich housings on their animosities. The revenues of priests and preachers would overpay the just demands of a protecting and frugal government. Let the protestant church be

no longer a hireling; and the popish will drop away rag after rag, image after image, to the great emolument of the barber's shop. The poor people of that persuasion would not long be so foolish and besotted, as to pay tythes, where the heretic pays none. Inequality would shake their creed, extortion would open their eyes, and they would feel on that occasion, as they now feel on another, that they were not, as they ought to be, in the same condition as their neighbours. The parties will never be peaceable, until the banner is thrown into the dust between them, and each tramples upon his own. Absurdities would soon cease if nobody could gain by them: within half a century, the whole people would find in their hands and hearts nothing else than the unencumbering and unexhausting page, which, if its spirit were received in its purity, might well be denominated the Book of Life. So mischievous an use however has been made of it, for nearly a thousand years, that, if you take, as Churches would force you, their glosses and interpretations for part of it, then indeed may it be called more properly, the book of imposture and extortion, of darkness and destruction.

FRANKLIN.

We may become so habituated to tyranny as neither to feel nor see it: the part on which its

poison has been perpetually dropping, is deadened. Else, would it be possible that throughout a whole nation, incomparably the most enlightened of any upon earth, young men should be sent from a distance, quite unknown to the parishioners, and often of a vicious or loose character, and for the greater part of a light one, to teach the experienced as well as the inexperienced their duties, and to be paid for a lesson which has been already taught by others!

WASHINGTON*.

Supposing an establishment to exist at all, the utmost that a grave and reflecting people could reasonably be expected to endure, is, that the bishop or elder, chosen by the clergy of the diocese, should nominate at least three persons, natives of his diocese, and of conduct well known to him, in order for the parishioners to appoint one of the number to the vacant benefice. They should agree with him upon the stipend, as they would do amicably, just as they agree with an apothecary for his attendence on the sick paupers. He should be removable for any offence against the laws, or for

* The king of Hanover has lately shewn his wisdom, in declaring that there is and shall be no predominant Church in that kingdom.

any habits which they and the bishop should declare to be inconsistent with his office.

FRANKLIN.

These remarks of yours are reasonable. In regard to the appointment of clergymen, the Roman church is more observant of propriety than the English. It rarely if ever happens that a parish-priest is sent from a distance to his cure: he almost always is chosen from among his neighbours. This difference would be a subject of wonder to me, if I did not likewise see the representatives of boroughs, not selected, as they were formerly, from among the most respectable of the burgesses, but invited for the greater part from a distance, and utterly unknown, both morally and politically, to those who depute them to parliament. Can any thing be more disgraceful to the inhabitants of a city, than to declare by their actions that none of them is worthy of confidence, or capable of transacting their affairs? And either this must be the inference, or we must attribute their conduct to the most scandalous venality.

I would obviate present evils by present remedies, as in the case of Ireland. Many good things cannot be done, many indifferent ones may be; if indeed those are to be called indifferent which are only so at the time, and very far from it in the

consequences. Religion, I agree with you, is too pure for corporations. It is best meditated on in our privacy, and best acted on in our ordinary intercourse with mankind. If we believe in Revelation, we must believe that God wishes us to converse with him but little, since the only form of address he has prescribed to us is an extremely short one. He has placed us where our time may be more beneficially employed, in mutually kind offices. He does not desire us to tell him, hour after hour, how dearly we love him, or how much we want from him: he knows these things exactly. These however are the very things which occupy the pulpit: and the ceremonies attending them and the modes of doing them, together with disquisitions on his body and parentage, have cost the lives ofmany millions. In money too and lands I have calculated what Europe has paid for them; but the sum total, if I could repeat it exactly, would confound the head of any arithmetician; nor was there ever a man in the world who could remember the figures, if he had heard them but once read to him. The despots of France never exacted by their detested corvèe so large a portion, as the pastors claim in England; a tenth forsooth of every man's industry; and this tenth is taken off the ground untaxed, while the other nine parts are liable to new

deductions. If truths are plain they ought not to cost so much; if not plain still less are they worth it. The tyrants of Sicily clamed a tenth of the corn, but not a tenth of oil or wine or hay or legumes, or fruits of any kind in which the island was equally abundant. This fully satisfied them, and sufficed to keep the bodies and minds of their subjects in regular order and due subjection.

WASHINGTON.

We never had to complain of England, for persecuting us by her foxhunters in the Church; nor indeed, to speak honestly and freely, so much of any persecution, as of idle and unprofitable vexation.

FRANKLIN.

The conduct of England, towards us, resembles that of Ebenezer Pollock towards his eldest son Jonas.

WASHINGTON.

I remember old Ebenezer; and I believe it was Jonas who, when another youth, after giving him much offence, and seeing him unresisting, would fain fight him, replied, *Nay, I will not fight thee, friend! but if thou dost with that fist what thou threatenest, by the Lord's help I will smite thee sore, marking thee for one of an ill unprofitable flock; and thou shalt walk home in heaviness, like a*

wether the first morning he was made so. Whereat he took off his coat, folded it up, and laid it on the ground, saying, *This at least hath done no harm, and deserveth good treatment.* The adversary, not admiring such an object of contemplation, went away, muttering more reasonable threats, conditional and subjunctive. Ebenezer, I guess, aggravated and wore out his son's patience; for the old man was rich and testy, and would have his comforts neither encroached upon nor much partaken.

FRANKLIN.

My story is this. Jonas had been hunting in the woods, and had contracted a rheumatism in the face, which drew it awry, and either from the pain it occasioned or from the medicines he took to cure it, rotted one of his grinders. Old Ebenezer was wealthy, had little to do, or to care about, made few observations on his family, sick or sound, and saw nothing particular in his son's countenance. However one day after dinner, when he had eaten heartily, he said to Jonas, *Son Jonas, methinks thy appetite is not over-keen: pick and welcome the other half of that hog's-foot.*

Father, answered he, *I have had a pain in my tooth the last fortnight; the northerly wind does it no good today: I would rather, if so be that you*

approve of it, eat a slice of yon fair cheesecake in the closet.

Why what ails the tooth? said Ebenezer.

Nothing more, replied Jonas, *than that I cannot chew with it what I used to chew.*

Drive a nail in the wall, quoth stoutly and courageously Ebenezer, *tie a string to one end and lace the other round thy tooth.*

The son performed a part of the injunction, but could not very dexterously twist the string around the grinder, for his teeth were close and the cord not over-fine. Then said the father kindly, *Open thy mouth, lad! give me the twine: back thy head: back it, I tell thee, over the chair.*

Not that, father, not that... the next, cried Jonas.

What dost mean? proudly and impatiently said Ebenezer. *Is not the string about it? dost hold my hand too, scape-grace? dost give me all this trouble for nought?*

Patience now, father, meekly said Jonas, with the cord across his tongue... *let me draw my tooth my own way.*

Follow thine own courses, serpent! indignantly exclamed Ebenezer... *as God's in Boston, thou art a most wilful and undutiful child.*

I hope not, father.

Hope not! rebel! Did not I beget thee, and thy teeth, one and all? have not I lodged thee, cloathed thee, and fed thee, these forty years, come Candlemas? and now, I warrant ye, all this bustle and backwardness about a rotten tooth! should I be a groat the richer for it, out or in?

WASHINGTON.

Dignity in private men and in governments has been little else, than a stately and stiff perseverance in oppression; and spirit, as it is called, little else than the foam of hard-mouthed insolence. Such at last is become the audacity of Power, from a century or more of holidays or riot, it now complains that you deprive it of its prerogative, if you limit the exercise of its malignant passions. I lament that there are those who can learn no lesson of humanity, unless we write it broadly with the point of the sword.

FRANKLIN.

Let us hope however that we may see the day, when these scholars shall be turned out of school.

WASHINGTON.

The object of our cares and solicitudes, at present, is the stability of the blessings we have obtained. No attempt against them is dangerous from without, nor immediately from within; but

the seeds of corruption are inherent, however latent, in all bodies, physical and political: guards therefor should be stationed, and laws enacted, to deterr adventurers from attempts at despotism.

FRANKLIN.

Other offences, even the greatest, are the violation of one law: despotism is the violation of all. The despot then should be punished, not only by loss of life, which the violation of only one law may incurr, and which leaves no pain, no repentance, no example, but also with exposure and scourges, as among the Romans. Conspiracies are weak and frivolous. The hand of every man should be directed against him, whose hand is directed against every man. Societies, on the contrary, should be instituted to recompense the avenger of humanity: every land should be his country, every free citizen his brother. The greatest men, according to what is taught in schools and colleges, are those who have offered the greatest violence to reason and humanity. The destroyers of freedom are more celebrated than its founders (Pompey than Pelopidas, Cesar than Timoleon), just as we hear more of him who burns a house than of him who builds one. In the proper choice of teachers, and in the right course of education, are to be found the best preventive laws against despotism.

Christianity, in its unadulterated form, is perfectly adapted to this intent: in its adulterated, it has been the main support of aggression and iniquity. If ever we reduce it in America to an *Establishment*, as people call it, its spirit flies, and its body so weighs upon us, that we cast it down, or let it slip quietly from our arms. For, christianity is in itself of such simplicity, that, whoever would make an establishment of it, must add imposture; and from imposture grows usurpation. Every mother, if left to herself, would teach her child, what that child, during the whole of his life-time, pays dearly for being taught, and what, from such payment, makes often an unkindly and unjust impression on him. He is obliged to purchase a commodity he does not require, and one which, sometimes it may happen, he has a larger store of than the patentee and vender. The most pious and moral men upon earth are the inhabitants of New-England and of Pensylvania; and they are so because their consciences have never been drilled nor swathed, and because they never have been taught to divide their offering, the prayer and psalm on this side, the bag of wheat and truss of clover on that, between God and the ministers of the church. While such men are existing, our independence and liberty are secure. Governments, in which there are establishments, will, without great prudence, fall

into danger from sects : every new one gives a fresh security and an additional stability to ours. A mixture of sects is as advantageous to a fair political system, as a mixture of blood is to the strength and perpetuity of the human race. Every thing wants gentle, insensible, unrestricted, renovation; air, fire, earth, water, the vegetables, the animals, man, states. To you, fellow-citizen and defender, the most beneficent on record is principally owing. If America had been conquered, the breath of Freedom had been stifled in every region of the world, and we should have lamented the fate even of the people who in their blindness would have enslaved us.

Looking to what may happen in future, on the ground you have marked out to me, I recollect an admirable law of Solon, which enacts that, in case of usurpation, the magistrates should resign their offices; and that he who continued his functions after the extinction of the popular power, should, together with the subverter of it, be punished with death, by any private citizen. Let jurists decide whether it be not right and expedient to punish not usurpers only, but (if in compliance with the vulgar use of language we must distinguish them) conquerors too, in this manner; on the principle that every individual may recover his own property, and slay the spoiler who detains it aggres-

sively: and let moralists judge, whether a few of such chastisements, on choice subjects, would not cool in a great degree the lust of spoliation and conquest. We will not be morose and captious with the lovers of peace and order: we will concede to them that it is a dangerous question to agitate, whether an arbitrary but salutary imprisonment now and then, with now and then an unlucky but well-meant torture, should be resisted or endured: for such things (they will tell us) happen occasionally in the most flourishing and best regulated governments; but when constitutions are destroyed and legal magistrates are displaced, every man may pick up the broken laws; and it is a virtue to exercise the most solemn and the most imperative of them gratuitously. That of Solon, moderate as he was, goes farther.

A similar law was enacted at Rome on the abolition of the decemvirate.

Ne quis ullum magistratum sine provocatione crearet: qui creasset, eum jus fasque esset occidi, neve ea cædes capitalis noxæ haberetur. Liv. III. 55.

Our constitution is flexible and yielding, by reason of its homogeniousness and its purity. Like the surface of our country, it may in some measure be changed by improvements and still preserve its character and features. The better part of what

we have imported from England is retained for the present; because it is difficult to introduce new regulations in times of trouble, and that the mischievous should not burst in between the old paling and the new. Nearly all these must be repealed, and the rest emended.

WASHINGTON.

In England more have been made and repealed again within one century, than in all the rest of the universe within three; not reckoning, as would be unfair, what has been effected by revolutions. The worst have lasted the longest*. Barrenness is perennial; fertility is the produce of a season. The whole system of representation, on which every thing depends of law and liberty, has been

* Nevertheless it is proved, and declared from the Bench, that the mass of the people lives in comfort, not to say in affluence. Mr. Justice Best informs us that *most of the industrious part of the community live upon nothing else than bread and water.*

That the laws are liberal is proved also, and declared from the Bench by the same high authority. He tells us that writers of newspapers ought to report *nothing* of the king, but what has been communicated by the ministry.

We may hope that, ere long, allied kings, instead of sending each other stars, snuff-boxes, and crosses, will amicably exchange ministers, jurists, and judges; all good and useful for all.

changed within our memory. But the chancery court,

Sedet æternumque sedebit.

This has carried more ruin and desolation into innocent families, than all the gaming-houses and other haunts of vice in the three kingdoms. Orphans, charities, are absorbed by the hundred and swallowed up by this inland Malstrom. The English talk of other grievances, and hardly notice this: we may be so near an object as not to see it in its full extent nor clearly.

FRANKLIN.

A sailor condemned to be hanged, was thus admonished: *Prepare yourself to appear before your eternal judge.*

What does his lordship mean? said he to the gaoler who was conducting him away. *Sure, I can have nothing to do with my lord chancellor! I have neither land nor tenement; and he would turn up his nose at my jacket and trowsers.*

There is no country where laws are so disproportionate to offences, so sanguinary, so disputable, so contradictory, so tardy, so expensive. Now these are the six principal defects of laws, and to which it would be difficult to add a seventh of weight: for laxity cannot coexist with them. More fortunes have been wrecked upon the shifting

sands of British jurisprudence, than ever have been engulphed by any one despotism: and more crimes are capital in England than were even known by name among the Jews in the time of Moses, or among the Athenians in the time of Draco.

WASHINGTON.

Our late enemies are now just as angry with us, as if they fancied we were mocking their mutability; some of them are more alarmed at the form of government we have chosen, than at any other consequence of our liberation: I think, without reason. Republicanism is fit only for nations grown up; and is equally ill adapted to those in decay and to those in infancy. Europeans do indeed call ours an infant state...

FRANKLIN.

Ay indeed? I never heard of an infant who kicked its mother down stairs.

WASHINGTON.

Be graver, Benjamin, and inform me whether, in your opinion, states do not reasonably date from their instruction and experience, and not from this or from that effect of vicissitude; and whether any nation in the world was ever better informed than ours, in its duties and interests.

FRANKLIN.

None on record: and God grant that every

novelty in our country, may be as just and reasonable as that contained in your observation, with regard to dates. We are as old a nation as the English, altho we are not so old in America as they in England. Crossing the ocean does not make a man younger, neither does it a people.

WASHINGTON.

Other accusations than those of juvenility are brought against us, and in appearance weightier. We are accused of the worst ingratitude, in having turned our strength and prosperity against the authors of it. Prosperity and strength never have excited a colony to rebellion, nor is wealth a whisperer to independence: but when arrogance and injustice stride forth into a colony strong and prosperous, it takes the advantage of its strength and prosperity; and then indeed wealth, which has not been the mover, becomes the supporter, of emancipation. Every colony of England hath shewn a desire of quitting her, when it could: not a single one of ancient Rome. Under the government of Hadrian, Utica, Italica, and Gades, enjoying the full privileges of municipal towns, entreated and obtained the title of colonies; altho in the former condition they might exercise all the magistracies, and enjoy all the dignities, of the republic. Yet Rome, we are informed, was the subjugator of mankind, and England the protector.

FRANKLIN.

God protect the wretchedest of his creatures from such protection!

WASHINGTON.

We have spoken of the danger to which every state, sooner or later, is subject from arbitrary power, and on the principles which ought to be instilled into every young citizen, first to guard against it, and then, if unsuccessful, to exterminate it. Aristocracy, in the eyes of many, is as great an evil, and more imminent. Hence we have a party in force against the institution of a Senate; and indeed if I could consider it as any thing like an aristocracy or oligarchy, in its gait or tendency, I should disapprove of it openly and loudly: but in fact ours is the only intermediate body which can do good; and I think it capable of this to a great extent. Hereditary senates, under whatever name, are eternally tearing and consuming the vitals of their country. Our senate brings no such evil with it: on the contrary, every thing about it is conservative and prospective. Its beneficent effects go beyond itself, and excede its attributions: for, as none can be elected into it whose fortunes do not shew him to have been prudent, and whose demeanour has not been regular and decorous, many spirits which from their *n*ature, from youth, from zeal, from ambition, would be

clamorous and unruly among our representatives, are controlled and guided by the hope of rising thence into this venerable assembly.

FRANKLIN.

Tiberius, the wisest of despots, to encrease his own power, encreased that of the senate, and transferred to it the business of the comitia. In more barbarous times the king and aristocracy will contend for power, and the people will lift up its head between them: in more civilized, when abundance of wealth produces abundance of offices, the two former will unite, and the people sink imperceptibly under them: for it is requisite, in such a state, to the existence of both, that the mass do not become rich or instructed; against which evils, wars and lucrative places are devised, and elections are so managed as to occasion a vast expenditure, and to be accompanied by as many vices as can find room amongst it. Where senates have not been the executive power, or the appointers of it, they have been instruments, but never intermediaries. That of papal Rome is in nothing less respectable than that of imperial. The venerable body went this very year before the *Holiness of our Lord*, requesting his permission to wear masks the last *

* This was likewise done in 1824.

week of the carneval. Who can doubt the utility and dignity of such institutions, or that something of such gravity and decorum ought always to stand between the prince and people?

WASHINGTON.

Other nations seem to entertain more fears for us, in the abundance of their benevolence, than we entertain for ourselves. They acknowledge you, and some few more amongst us, to be honest and well-meaning persons, and, pressing them hardly, do not deny altogether that you are moderate, reasonable, not ill-informed, capable of instruction, nay indeed, wise: yet the merest youths, whist-players and jockeys, turn their heads across their shoulders to give you a word of advice. When the popular part, the senatorial part, the executive part, are summarily discussed, the whole is taken up as lightly and as easily disposed of. *Republics cannot stand* is the exclamation of council-board and sounding-board; the echo of Church and Chamber.

FRANKLIN.

I would reduce the question to as few words as they would. A single argument is enough for a single truth: whatever comes after, is in part illustration, in part confusion.

When the advantages of kingship and repub-

licanism are opposed, the main inquiry is, not about forms or families, not about the government of the fewer or the more; but, whether the good shall controll the bad, or the bad controll the good. A whole people cannot long together err in its choice. One man or two may agree with a groom that an unsound horse is a sound one; but twenty will not, take the twenty even at hazard. The greater advantage is, however, when you can send back the horse after trying him, or change him on discovering his infirmity.

In government, as in all other things, we, and not only we, but even those wiser and greater men, the ministers of kings, may profit by reading the first half-page in the *Elements of Geometry*, in which we find that *the right line is the shortest way from one point to another*, and, I would add, *cæteris paribus*, the easiest and surest.

We were called, a little while ago, the partisans of anarchy. At that time we could not argue with our opponents, as being one and all of them in a state of frenzy; but now that their arms are tied behind them, and that they are at home and abed, we may reason calmly with them, and tell them that no number is so near to nothing as one, and no government so near to anarchy as monarchy. There is more than one kind of anarchy, tho there

is only one known by name. There are plants and metals under our very feet, unclassed and undescribed. We are in the habit of calling those bodies of men anarchal which are in a state of effervescence; but the most anarchal of all are those which surrender self-rule to the caprice of the worst informed and most rickety members of society. Anarchy, like other things, has its certain state and season of quiescence; and its features are only the more flushed and discomposed by the somnolence of repletion and supineness.

WASHINGTON.

A third question, of less intense anxiety, is raised by those who read our fortunes, not in the palms of our hands, but in the clouds. At some future day, they portend to us that every province will be an independent state.

FRANKLIN.

Horrible prediction! We shall experience the misfortune then to have cultivated all our wilds; to have subdivided and peopled hill, forest, and savanna; to have excavated quarries, mines, canals; to have erected arsenals, to have constructed navies; to be so rich, in short, and so powerful, as to fear no enemy and to need no neighbour. The time undoubtedly will come, when each province will produce as much as all do now: so that as

easily and safely as all now stand together, each will then stand alone. A long experience of their true interests, a certainty that they depend upon peace and concord, will render wars impossible amongst them; and if any European power should have the temerity to attack the weakest of them, not only will our other states chastise it, but its own subjects will abandon or subvert it. Repose from oppression, rest from persecution, and reward for honesty and industry, are found here: even a labourer gains more in this country than a *professor of humanity** in some of the most civilized on the other continent. Resolute to defend these advantages, the children of America are for ever free: those of Europe, many years yet, must thread the labyrinth, and face the Minotaur.

* "Concordia (province of the Modenese). Competition is open for the office of public master in humanity and rhetoric at this place, beginning from the 6th of November. The stipend is eight hundred livres annually."

Gazetta di Firenze, 1 *Luglio* 1823.

This is some what less than one half of what is paid in Philadelphia to a *nightman*: Diggers of canals gain the triple. The necessaries of life in Modena are dearer than in America.

I understand that some remarks on the government of the church in Ireland have been offered to Parliament, I know

not by what Scotch member, much resembling those which I attribute to Franklin. The dialogue was sent to England for publication long before; but altho I required no participation of profit by it, some printers were reluctant to undertake it from the unfashionableness of the sentiments, and others from the obscurity of the author. It has passed through several hands; so that many things, it is reasonable to suppose, may have transpired, partly from the extravagance of the matter, and partly from the peculiarity of the style. What has been represented to me as the most visionary and absurd, is, the supposition that the catholic church in England, or elsewhere, could ever admitt any directing power which emanates not from the bishop of Rome.

I would dogmatize with none; I would dispute with few: instead of either, I transcribe some sentences from Carrion, a catholic author... Itaque instituit Gregorius *per cæremonias Ecclesiæ statum in concordiam revocare.* Orta est et *contentio* hoc tempore de *primatu:* voluit enim Mauritius Cæsar, ut patriarcha Constantinopolitanus *œcumenicus, sive Episcopus universalis, in Ecclesiâ christianâ diceretur.* Sed Gregorius id suo adsensu comprobare non voluit, et christianâ constantiâ usus scripsit, *Neminem id sibi arrogare debere ut inter Christianos Episcopus universalis velit nominari.* Anno Christi DLXXXIV. Chron: lib. iv. p. 272. Venetiis ad signum Spei 1548.

Bonifacius the third obtained from the emperor Phocas, who had assassinated his master and benefactor Mauritius, that he should be styled Œcumenicus or Universal Bishop. It is worthy of remark, that the popes have obtained every fresh accession of power from usurpers; and that for the first six hundred years, however dark and turbulent, they abstained from those pretensions which they have since so pertinaciously

asserted. The ambition of Bonifacius raised up that of a much wiser and still bolder impostor. The churches of the East received with scorn and anger the intelligence of this usurpation; and the spirit of discord, which never breathed so violently and so uninterruptedly in any other religion, and which has not intermitted one moment in the eighteen hundred years, since peace and goodwill toward man was first preached upon earth, induced an Arab to collect a few of his countrymen, disbanded and defrauded by Heraclius, and to preach to them plainer doctrines than the papal. Provinces, kingdoms, empires, yielded to him; and while Arians and Catholics were fighting for Christ against the command of Christ, the more populous, warlike, and civilized part of the world revolted from both standards. In that which still countenances the system, about a sixth of the wealth is possessed by the clergy, for teaching what every mother is capable of inculcating, and what Christ taught plainly once for all. To favour the establishment of this order, it was necessary to reverse the prophecy of Isaiah: instead of making the rough smooth, to make the smooth rough, and to excite disputes on words, unintelligible and unimportant. Hence we find perpetually the terms, *pernicious* errors, *impious* doctrines, *execrable* heresies; but are rarely told of the perniciousness, impiety, and execrableness, of cruelty, malice, falsehood, lust, ambition. Hence the people are not permitted to read the precepts of Christ, but are ordered to believe the legend of Saint *Hankerchief* or Saint *Eleventhousand*, to embrace the holy faith of an enthusiast, who gravely tells us he believes a thing because it is impossible, and to place the same confidence in a lying old dotard, who asserts that he filed his teeth in order to speak Hebrew.

While there are religious establishments paid by the people,

against their consent, or even partially with it, there will always be dissatisfaction and discontent. Unhappily most of Christ's doctrines are superseded: there is one which was never in fashion, and which, where all are good, is among the best: *Commune with thine own heart in thy chamber, and be still.* This, if attended to, would put the bishops' bench on three legs; but it would empty our poor-houses, fill our manufactories, and pay our debt.

When certain men are loudest, they feel least. Indeed there is a great deal less bigotry in the world, than is usually supposed, and a great deal more insincerity. Our faith is of little moment to those who declame against it: they are angry, not at our blindness, as they call it, but that the blind man will trust his own dog and staff rather than theirs, and, above all, that he will carry the scrip. This is wilfulness in him; they would fain open his eyes to save him from the sin of such wilfulness; and they break him a limb or two because he will not take them for his oculists.

Love of power resides in the heart of every man, and is well regulated and discreet in few. Accompanied by genius, it is also too frequently accompanied by pride and arrogance. Altho it assumes to itself the highest character, it is really among the weakest of our affections. Those who differ from the domineering party are always stigmatized by them with the name of sectaries; and what reflecting man has not remarked the force that lies in a name? Yet, when the Pope called Luther a sectary, a little learning would have shewn him that the title better suited himself, and that, according to Cato the elder, *Sectarius porcus est qui gregem præcedens ducit,* and not he who falls off and comes up after.

CONVERSATION III.

ROGER ASCHAM

AND

THE LADY JANE GREY.

ROGER ASCHAM

AND

THE LADY JANE GREY.

ASCHAM.

Thou art going, my dear young lady, into a most awful state; thou art passing into matrimony and great wealth. God hath willed it so: submitt in thankfulness.

Thy affections are rightly placed and well distributed. Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a great degree, is inspired by honour in a greater: it never reaches its plenitude of growth and perfection, but in the most exalted minds... Alas! alas!

JANE.

What aileth my virtuous Ascham? what is amiss? why do I tremble?

ASCHAM.

I remember a sort of prophecy, made three years ago: it is a prophecy of thy condition and of my feelings on it. Recollectest thou who wrote, sitting upon the seabeach, the evening after an excursion to the Isle of Wight, these verses?

Invisibly bright water! so like air,
On looking down I feared thou couldst not bear
My little bark, of all light barks most light,
And looked again... and drew me from the sight,
And, hanging back, breathed each fresh gale aghast,
And held the bench, not to go on so fast.

JANE.

I was very childish when I composed them; and, if I had thought any more about the matter, I should have hoped you had been too generous to keep them in your memory, as witnesses against me.

ASCHAM.

Nay, they are not much amiss for so young a girl, and there being so few of them, I did not reprove thee. Half an hour, I then thought, might have been spent more unprofitably; and I now shall believe it firmly, if thou wilt but be led by them to meditate a little, on the similarity of situation in which thou then wert to what thou art now in.

JANE.

I will do it, and whatever else you command me; for I am too weak by nature and very timorous, unless where a strong sense of duty holdeth me and supporteth me: there God acteth, and not his creature.

Those were with me at sea who would have been attentive to me, if I had seemed to be afraid, even tho worshipful men and women were in the company; so that something more powerful threw my fear overboard: but I never will go again upon the water.

ASCHAM.

Exercise that beauteous couple, that mind and body, much and variously, but at home, at home, Jane! indoors, and about things indoors; for God is there too. We have rocks and quicksands on the banks of our Thames, O lady, such as Ocean never heard of; and many (who knows how soon!) may be ingulphed in the smooth current under their garden-walls.

JANE.

Thoroughly do I now understand you. Yes indeed, I have redd evil things of courts; but I think nobody can go out bad thence who entereth good, if timely and true warning shall have been kindly and freely given.

ASCHAM.

I see perils on perils which thou dost not see, although thou art wiser than thy poor old master. And it is not because Love hath blinded thee, for that surpasseth his supposed omnipotence; but it is because thy tender heart, having always leant affectionately upon good, hath felt and known nothing of evil.

I once persuaded thee to reflect much: let me now persuade thee to avoid the habitude of reflexion, to lay aside books, and to gaze carefully and stedfastly on what is under and before thee.

JANE.

I have well bethought me of all my duties: O how extensive they are! what a goodly and fair inheritance! But tell me, wouldst thou command me never more to read Cicero and Epictetus and Polybius? the others I do resign unto thee: they are good for the arbour and for the gravel-walk: but leave unto me, I beseech thee, my friend and father, leave unto me, for my fireside and for my pillow, truth, eloquence, courage, constancy.

ASCHAM.

Read them on thy marriagebed, on thy childbed, on thy deathbed! Thou spotless undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well! These are the men for men: these are to fashion the

bright and blessed creatures, O Jane, whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom.... Mind thou thy husband.

JANE.

I sincerely love the youth who hath espoused me; I love him with the fondest, the most solicitous affection. I pray to the Almighty for his goodness and happiness, and do forget at times, unworthy supplicant! the prayers I should have offered for myself. O never fear that I will disparage my kind religious teacher, by disobedience to my husband, in the most trying duties.

ASCHAM.

Gentle is he, gentle and virtuous: but time will harden him: time must harden even thee, sweet Jane! Do thou, complacently and indirectly, lead him from ambition.

JANE.

He is contented with me and with home.

ASCHAM.

Ah Jane, Jane! men of high estate grow tired of contentedness.

JANE.

He told me he never liked books unless I read them to him. I will read them to him every evening: I will open new worlds to him, richer than those discovered by the Spaniard; I will con-

duct him to treasures... O what treasures!... on which he may sleep in innocence and peace.

ASCHAM.

Rather do thou walk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his every thing that love and poetry have invented: but watch him well, sport with his fancies; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheeks; and if ever he meditate on power, go, toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse.

Teach him to live unto God and unto thee: and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.

CONVERSATION IV.

LORD BACON

AND

RICHARD HOOKER.

LORD BACON

AND

RICHARD HOOKER.

BACON.

HEARING much of your worthiness and wisdom, master Richard Hooker, I have besought your comfort and consolation in this my too heavy affliction: for we often do stand in need of hearing what we know full well, and our own balsams must be poured into our breasts by another's hand. As the air at our doors is often more expeditious in removing pain and heaviness from the body than the most farfetched remedies would be, so the voice alone of a neighbourly and friendly visitant may be more effectual in assuaging our sorrows, than whatever is most forcible in rhetoric and most recondite in wisdom. For on these occasions we cannot put ourselves in a posture to receive the

latter, and still less are we at leisure to look into the corners of our storeroom, and to uncurl the leaves of our references. As for Memory, who, you may tell me, would save us the trouble, she is footsore enough in all conscience with me, without going further back. Withdrawn as you live from court and courtly men, and having ears occupied by better reports, than such as are flying about me, yet haply so hard a case as mine, befalling a man heretofore not averse from the studies in which you also take delight, may have touched you with some concern.

HOOKER.

I do think, my lord of Verulam, that, unhappy as you appear, God in sooth has foregone to chasten you, and that the day which in his wisdom he appointed for your trial, was the very day on which the king's majesty gave unto your ward and custody the great seal of his English realm. And yet perhaps it may be, let me utter it without offence, that your features and stature were from that day forward no longer what they were before. Such an effect do power and rank and office produce even on prudent and religious men.

A hound's whelp howleth if you pluck him up above where he stood: man, in much greater peril of falling, doth rejoice. You, my lord, as befitteth

you, are smitten and contrite, and do appear in deep wretchedness and tribulation, to your servants and those about you; but I know that there is always a balm, which lies uppermost in these afflictions, and that no heart rightly softened can be very sore.

BACON.

And yet, master Richard, it is surely no small matter, to lose the respect of those who looked up to us for countenance, and the favour of a right learned king, and, O master Hooker! such a power of money! But money is mere dross. I should always hold it so, if it possessed not two qualities; that of making men treat us reverently, and that of enabling us to help the needy.

HOOKER.

The respect, I think, of those who respect us for what a fool can give, and a rogue can take away, may easily be dispensed with: but it is indeed a high prerogative to help the needy; and when it pleases the Almighty to deprive us of it, let us believe that he foreknows our inclination to negligence in the charge entrusted to us, and that in his mercy he has removed from us a most fearful responsibility.

BACON.

I know a number of poor gentlemen to whom I could have rendered aid.

HOOKER.

Have you examined and sifted their worthiness?

BACON.

Well and deeply.

HOOKER.

Then must you have known them long before your adversity, and while the means of succouring them were in your hands.

BACON.

You have circumvented and entrapped me, master Hooker. Faith! I am mortified... you the schoolman, I the schoolboy!

HOOKER.

Say not so, my lord. Your years and wisdom are abundantly more than mine, your knowledge higher, your experience richer. Our wits are not always in blossom upon us. When the roses are overcharged and languid, up springs a spike of rue. Mortified on such an occasion! God forefend it! But again to the business... I should never be over-penitent for my neglect of needy gentlemen, who have neglected themselves much worse. They have chosen their profession with its chances and contingences. If they had protected their country by their courage, or adorned it by their studies, they would have merited, and, under a king of such learning and such equity, would have received in some sort their reward. I

look upon them as so many old cabinets of ivory and tortoiseshell, scratched, flawed, splintered, rotten, defective both within and without, hard to unlock, insecure to lock up again, unfit to use.

BACON.

Methinks it beginneth to rain, master Richard. What if we comfort our bodies with a small cup of wine, against the ill temper of the air.

Wherefor in God's name are you affrightened?

HOOKER.

Not so, my lord, not so.

BACON.

What then affects you?

HOOKER.

Why indeed, since your lordship interrogates me... I looked, idly and imprudently, into that rich buffette; and I saw, unless the haze of the weather has come into the parlour, or my sight is the worse for last night's reading, no fewer than six silver pints. Surely six tables for company are laid only at coronations.

BACON.

There are many men so squeamish, that forsooth they would keep a cup to themselves, and never communicate it to their neighbour or best friend; a fashion which seems to me offensive in an honest house, where no disease of ill repute ought

to be feared. We have lately, master Richard, adopted strange fashions; we have run into the wildest luxuries. The lord Leicester, I heard it from my father... God forefend it should ever be recorded in our history... when he entertained queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth-castle, laid before her Majesty a fork of pure silver. I the more easily credit it, as master Thomas Coriatt doth vouch for having seen the same monsterous sign of voluptuousness at Venice. We are surely the especial favorites of Providence, when such wantonness hath not melted us quite away. After this portent, it would otherwise have appeared incredible, that we should have broken the Spanish Armada!

Pledge me: hither comes our wine.

Dolt! villain! is not this the beverage I reserve for myself?

The blockhead must imagine that malmsey runs in a stream under the ocean, like the Alpheus. Bear with me, good master Hooker, but verily I have little of this wine, and I keep it as a medicine for my many and growing infirmities. You are younger; weaker drink is more wholesome for you. The lighter ones of France are best of all accommodated by Nature to our constitutions, and therefor she hath placed them so within our

reach, that we have only to stretch out our necks, in a manner, and drink them from the vat. But this malmsey, this malmsey, flies from centre to circumference, and makes youthful blood to boil.

HOOKER.

Of a truth, my knowledge in such matters is but spare. My lord of Canterbury once ordered part of a goblet, containing some strong Spanish wine, to be taken to me from his table, when I dined by sufference with his chaplains, and altho a most discreet prudent man, as befitteth his high station, was not so chary of my health as your lordship. Wine is little to be trifled with, physic less. The Cretans, the brewers of this malvasy, have many aromatic and very powerful herbs amongst them. On their mountains, and notably on Ida, grows that dittany which works such marvels, and which perhaps may give activity to this hot medicinal drink of theirs. I would not touch it, knowingly: an unregarded leaf, dropt into it above the ordinary, might add such puissance to the concoction, as almost to break the buckles in my shoes: since we have good and valid authority, that the wounded hart, on eating therof, casts the arrow out of his haunch or entrails, altho it stuck a palm deep.

BACON.

When I read of such things I doubt them. Religion and politics belong to God, and to God's vicegerent the king: we must not touch upon them unadvisedly: but if I could procure a plant of dittany on easy terms, I would persuade my apothecary and my gamekeeper to make some experiments.

HOOKER.

I dare not distrust what grave writers have declared, in matters beyond my knowledge.

BACON.

Good master Hooker, I have read many of your reasonings; and they are admirably well sustained: added to which, your genius has given such a strong current to your language, as can come only from a mighty elevation and a most abundant plenteousness. Yet forgive me, in God's name, my worthy master, if you descried in me some expression of wonder at your simplicity. We are all weak and vulnerable somewhere: common men in the higher parts; heroes, as was feigned of Achilles, in the lower. You would define to a hair's breadth, the qualities, states, and dependencies, of Principalities, Dominations, and Powers; you would be unerring about the Apostols and the Churches; and 'tis wonderful how you wander about a potherb.

HOOKER.

I know my poor weak intellects, most noble lord, and how scantily they have profited by all my hard painstaking. Comprehending few things, and those imperfectly, I say only what other have said before, wise men and holy; and if, by passing thro my heart into the wide world around me, it pleaseth God that this little treasure shall have lost nothing of its weight and pureness, my exultation is then the exultation of humility. Wisdom consisteth not in knowing many things; nor even in knowing them thoroughly; but in choosing and in following what conduces the most certainly to our lasting happiness and true glory. And this wisdom, my lord of Verulam, cometh from above.

BACON.

I have observed, among the well informed and the ill informed, nearly the same quantity of infirmities and follies: those who are rather the wiser keep them separate, and those who are wisest of all keep them better out of sight. Now examine the sayings and writings of the prime philosophers; and you will often find them, master Richard, to be untruths made to resemble truths: the business with them is to approximate as nearly as possible; and not to touch it: the goal of the charioteer is *evitata fervidis rotis*, as some poet saith. But

we who care nothing for chaunts and cadences, and have no time to catch at applauses, push forward over stones and sands straitway to our object. I have persuaded men, and shall persuade them for ages, that I possess a wide range of thoughts, unexplored by others, and first thrown open by me, with many fair inclosures of choice and abstruse knowledge. I have incited and instructed them to examine all subjects of useful and rational inquiry: very few that occurred to me have I myself left untouched or untried. One however hath almost escaped me, and surely one worth the trouble.

HOOKER.

Pray, my lord, if I am guilty of no indiscretion, what may it be?

BACON.

Francis Bacon.

Lest it be thought that authority is wanting for the strong expression of Hooker on the effects of dittany, I referr the reader to the curious treatise of Plutarch on the reasoning faculties of animals, in which, near the end, he asks, "Who instructed the deer, wounded by the Cretan arrow, to seek for dittany? on the tasting of which herb, the bolts fall immediately from their bodies."

I do not remember to have read in other authors that the effect is quite so instantaneous; and I have not leisure for an index-hunt... a good half-hour's work.

CONVERSATION V.

GENERAL LASCY

AND

THE CURATE MERINO.

GENERAL LASCY

AND

THE CURATE MERINO.

MERINO.

GENERAL, we have fought in the same cause, and I shall be sorry if our sentiments at last diverge. What is peace, if there be not concord?

LASCY.

Enthusiasm makes way for reflexion, and reflexion leads to that concord which we both desire. We think first of our wrongs, and afterwards of our rights. Injustice may become, where there is anything to be stirred, a lighter evil to the sufferer than to the worker.

MERINO.

We talk of the people and of parliaments, and, as it appears to me, are blindly following the restless and changeful French. In fact we are ready in our politics to build up a tower of Babel. Shall these miscreants persuade us that they are the

cleverest people in the world, by sweetening us a cup of chocolate with a bunch of turnips or a truss of hay, or by whipping us off a leg while we are saying an ave-maria. Let them instruct us in surgery and chemistry, but let them always be considered as our inferiors in morality and government.

LASCY.

Here, señor Curado, we agree perfectly. Prosperity has made them so giddy, adversity cannot sober them. The varnish, that once covered their sharp and shallow character, cracked off in the dogdays of the revolution, and they have lost the greatest of their virtues, their hypocrisy. Altho I have fought against them and against their partisans, while they were under the same banners, yet I would gladly see all Spaniards in amity and at home. The French faction, as you call it, fought for the same object as we did.

MERINO.

How! they fought for our beloved Ferdinand!

LASCY.

They fought for our beloved Spain, for her independence, for her freedom. Ought they to be persecuted, because they were betrayed? Should we murder a man, because he has fallen into a pit? or starve him to death, because he has gone for

bread to another baker than ours? and liberty is surely, like bread, an article of the first necessity to a Spaniard.

MERINO.

They followed not their lawful king.

LASCY.

Did we? did any wise man? did not all implore him to remain? did not all deprecate and detest that lowest of degradation, which he neither scorned nor shunned, but ran into and courted?

MERINO.

It was God's will. As for those rebels, the finger of God...

LASCY.

Prythee, señor Curado, let God's finger alone. Very worthy men are apt to snatch at it upon too light occasions: they would stop their tobacco-pipes with it, if they could. If Spain, in the opinion of our late opponents, could have obtained a free constitution by other means, they never would have joined the French. True, they persisted: but how few have wisdom or courage enough to make the distinction between retracting an error and deserting a cause! He who declares himself a party-man, let his party profess the most liberal sentiments, is a registered and enlisted slave: he begins by being a zealot, and ends by being a

dupe: he is tormented by regret and anger; yet is he incapable, from shame and irresolution, of throwing off the badge and livery under which he sweats and fumes, as tho in the empoisoned garment dyed with the life-blood of the Centaur.

MERINO.

How much better is it to abolish all parties, by fixing a legitimate king at the head of affairs!

LASCY.

The object, thank God, is accomplished. Ferdinand is returning to Madrid, if perverse men do not mislead him.

MERINO.

And yet there are Spaniards mad enough to talk of cortes and chambers of peers.

LASCY.

Of the latter I know nothing: but I know that Spain formerly was great, free, and happy, by the administration of her cortes; and as I preferr in policy old experiments to new ones, I should not be sorry, if the madness, as you call it, spread in that direction.

There are many forms of government, but only two kinds; the free and the despotic: in the one the people has its representatives, in the other not. Freedom, to be, must be perfect: the half-free can no more exist than the half-entire. Restraints

laid by a people on itself are sacrifices made to Liberty; and it never exerts a more beneficent or a greater power than in imposing them. The nation that pays taxes without its own consent is under slavery: whosoever causes, whosoever maintains, that slavery, subverts or abets the subversion of social order. Whoever is above the law is out of the law, just as evidently as whoever is above this room is out of this room. If men will outlaw themselves by overt actions, we are not to condemn those who remove them, by the means least hazardous to the public peace. If even my daughter brought forth a monster, I could not arrest the arm that should smother it: and monsters of this kind are by infinite degrees less pernicious, than such as rise up in society by violation of law.

In regard to a chamber of peers, Spain does not contain the materials. What has been the education of our grandees? how narrow the space between the hornbook and the sanbenito! The English are amazed, and the French are indignant, that we have not imitated their constitutions. All constitutions formed for the French are provisionary. Whether they trip or tumble, whether they step or slide, the tendency is direct to slavery: none but a most rigid government will

restrain them from cruelty or from mischief: they are scourged into good humour, and starved into content. I have read whatever I could find written on the English constitution. It appears to me, like the Deity, an object universally venerated, but requiring a Revelation. I do not find the house of peers as I expected to find it, standing between the king and people. Throughout a long series of years, it has been only twice in opposition to the Commons: once in declaring that the slave-trade ought not to be abolished; again in declaring that those who believed in transubstantiation were unfit to command an army or to decide a cause.

MERINO.

Into what extravagances does infidelity lead men, otherwise not unwise! Blessed virgin of the thousand pains, and great Santiago of Compostella, deign to bring that benighted nation back again to the right path!

LASCY.

On deity we reason by attributes, on government by metaphors. Wool or sand, embodied, may deaden the violence of what is discharged against the walls of a city: hereditary aristocracy has no such virtue against the assaults of despotism, which on the contrary it will maintain in opposition to

the people; since its power and wealth, altho they are given *by* the king, must be given *from* the nation, and the latter has not an interest in enriching it, the former has. All the countries that ever have been conquered, have been surrendered to the conqueror by the aristocracy, which stipulates for its own property, power, and rank, yielding up the men, cattle, and metals, on the common. Nevertheless in every nation the project of an upper chamber will be warmly cherished. The richer aspire to honours, the poorer to protection. Every family of wealth and respectability wishes to count a peer among its relatives, and, where the whole number is yet under nomination, every one may hope it. Those who have no occasion for protectors, desire the power of protecting, and those who have occasion for them, desire them to be more efficient.

Despotism sits nowhere so secure, as under the image and ensigns of Freedom. You would imagine that the British peers have given their names to beneficent institutions, wise laws, and flourishing colonies: no such thing: instead of which, a slice of meat between two slices of bread derives its name from one, a tumble of heels over head, a feat performed by beggar-boys on the roads, from another. The former, I presume, was a practical

commentator on the Roman fable of the belly and the members, and maintained with all his power and interest the supremacy of the nobler part; and the latter was of a family in which the head notoriously was heavier than the legs. Others divide their titles with a waistcoat, a bonnet, and a boot; the more illustrious with some island inhabited by sea-calves.

MERINO.

I deprecate such importations into our monarchy. God forbid that the ermine of his Catholic Majesty be tagged with the sordid tail of such a rough monster as feudality.

LASCY.

If kings, whether by reliance on external force, by introduction of external institutions, or by misapplication of what they may possess within the realm, shew a disposition to conspire with other kings against its rights, it may be expected that communities will, some secretly and others openly, unite their moral, their intellectual, and, when opportunity permits it, their physical powers against them. If alliances are holy, entered into upon the very soil just usurped, surely not unholy are those which are formed for defence against all kinds and all methods of spoliation. If men are marked out for banishment, for imprisonment, for

slaughter, because they assert the rights and defend the liberties of their country, can you wonder at seeing, as you must ere long, the confederacy of all free countries, formed for the apprehension or extinction of whoever pays, disciplines, or directs, under whatsoever title, those tremendous masses of human kind, which consume the whole produce of their native land in depopulating another? Is it iniquitous or unnatural, that laws be opposed to edicts, and constitutions to despotism? O señor Merino, there are yet things holy: all the barbarians and all the autocrats in the universe cannot make that word a byword to the Spaniard. Yes, there may be holy alliances; and the hour strikes for their establishment. This beautiful earth, these heavens in their magnificence and splendour, have seen things more lovely and more glorious than themselves. The throne of God is a speck of darkness, if you compare it with the heart, that beats only, and beats constantly, to pour forth its blood for the preservation of our country! Invincible Spain! how many of thy children have laid this pure sacrifice on the altar! The Deity has accepted it... and there are those who would cast its ashes into the winds.

If ever a perverseness of character, or the perfidy taught in courts, should induce a king of Spain to

violate his oath, to massacre his subjects, to proscribe his friends, to imprison his defenders, to abolish the representation of the people, Spain will be drawn by resentment to do what Policy in vain has whispered in the ear of Generosity. She and Portugal will be one: nor will she be sensible of any disgrace in exchanging a prince of French origin for a prince of Portuguese. After all, there is a northwest passage to the golden shores of Freedom; and, if pirates infest the opener seas, brave adventurers will cut their way thro it. Let kings tremble at nothing but their own fraudulence and violence; and never at popular assemblies; which alone can direct them unerringly.

MERINO.

Educated as kings are, we cannot wonder if they see a chimera in a popular assembly.

LASCY.

Those who refuse to their people a national and just representation, calling it a chimera, will one day remember that he who purchases their affections at the price of a chimera, purchases them cheaply: and those who, having promised the boon, retract it, will put their hand to the signature, directed by a hand of iron. State after state comes forward in asserting its rights, as wave follows wave; each acting upon each: and the tem-

pest is gathering in regions where no murmur or voice is audible. Portugal pants for freedom, in other words is free. With one foot in England and the other in Brazil, there was danger in withdrawing either: she appears however to have recovered her equipoise. Accustomed to fix her attention upon England, wisely will she act if she imitates her example in the union with Ireland; an union which ought to cause no other regret than in having been celebrated so late. If on the contrary she believes that national power and prosperity are the peculiar gifts of independence, she must believe that England was more powerful and prosperous in the days of her heptarchy than fifty years ago. Algarve would find no more advantage in her independence of Portugal, than Portugal would find in continuing detached from the other portions of the peninsula. There were excellent reasons for declaring her independence at the time; there now are better, if better be possible, for a coalition. She, like ourselves, is in danger of losing her colonies: how can either party by any other means retrieve its loss? Normandy and Britanny, after centuries of war, joined the other provinces of France: more centuries of severer war would not sunder them. We have no such price to pay. Independence is always the sentiment

that follows liberty; and unfortunately it is always the most ardently desired by that country, which, supposing the administration of law to be similar and equal, derives the greatest advantage from the union. According to the state of society in two countries, to the justice or injustice of government, to proximity or distance, independence may be good or bad. Normandy and Britanny would have found it hurtful and pernicious: they would have been corrupted by bribery, and overrun by competitors, the more formidable and the more disastrous from a parity of force. They had not however so weighty reasons for an union with France, as Portugal has with Spain.

MERINO.

To avoid the collision of king and people, I wish an assembly to be composed of the higher clergy and principal nobility.

LASCY.

What should produce any collision, any dissension or dissidence between king and people? Is all the wisdom of a nation less than an individual's? Can *it* not see its own interests? and ought *he* to see any other? Surround the throne with state and lustre, but withhold from it the means of corruption, which must overflow upon itself, and sapp it. To no intent or purpose can

they ever be employed, unless to subvert the constitution; and beyond the paling of a constitution a king is *fera naturæ*. Look at Russia and Turkey: how few of their czars and sultans have died a natural death! unless indeed in such a state of society the most natural death of all is a violent one. I would not accustom men to daggers and poisons; for which reason, among others, I would remove them as far as possible from despotism.

To talk of France is nugatory: England then, where more causes are tried within the year, than among us within ten, has only twelve judges, criminal and civil, in her ordinary courts. A culprit, or indeed an innocent man, may lie six months in prison before his trial, on suspicion of having stolen a petticoat or pair of slippers. As for her civil laws, they are more contradictory, more dilatory, more complicated, more uncertain, more expensive, more inhumane, than any now in use among men. All who appeal to them for redress of injury, suffer an aggravation of it; and when Justice comes down at last, she alights on ruins. Public opinion is the only bulwark against oppression, and the voice of wretchedness is upon most occasions too feeble to excite it. Law in England, and in most other countries of Europe, is the crown of injustice, burning and intolerable as that ham-

mered and nailed upon the head of Zekkler, after he had been forced to eat the quivering flesh of his companions in insurrection *. In the statutes of the North-American United States, there is no such offence as libel upon the government; because in that country there is no worthless wretch whose government leads to, or can be brought into, contempt. This undefined and undefinable offence, in England, hath consigned many just men and eminent scholars to poverty and imprisonment, to incurable maladies, and untimely death. Law, like the Andalusian bull, lowers her head and shuts her eyes before she makes her push; and either she misses her object altogether, or she leaves it immersed in bloodshed.

When an action is laid by one subject against another, in which he seeks indemnity for an injury done to his property, his comforts, or his character, a jury awards the amount: but if some parasite of the king wishes to mend his fortune, after a run of bad luck at the gaming-table or of improvident bets on the race-course, he informs the attorney-general that he has detected a libel on majesty, which, unless it be chastised and checked by the timely interference of those blessed institu-

* See Albrizzi *Sull' origine del Danubio.* Vol. II. p. 47: see also the *Respublica Hungarica.*

tions whence they are great and glorious, would leave no man's office, or honour, or peace, inviolable. It may happen that the writer, at worst, hath indulged his wit on some personal fault, some feature in the character far below the crown: this is enough for a prosecution: and the author, if found guilty, lies at the mercy of the judge. The jury in this case is never the awarder of damages: are then the English laws equal for all? Recently there was a member of parliament, who declared to the people such things against the government, as were openly called seditious and libelous, both by his colleagues and his judges. He was condemned to pay a fine, amounting to less than the hundredth part of his property, and to be confined for three months... in an apartment more airy and more splendid than any in his own house. Another wrote something ludicrous about majesty, and was condemned, he and his brother, to pay the full half of their property, and to be confined among felons for two years! This confinement was deemed so flagrantly cruel, that the magistrates soon afterwards allowed a little more light, a little more air, and better company; not however in separate wards, but separate prisons. The judge who pronounced the sentence, is still living; he lives un-

bruized, unbranded, and he appears like a man among men.

MERINO.

Why not? He shewed his spirit, firmness, and fidelity: in our country he would be appointed grand-inquisitor on the next vacancy, and lead the queen to her seat at the first *auto de fe*. Idlers and philosophers may complain; but certainly this portion of the English institutions ought to be commended warmly by every true Spaniard, every friend to the altar and throne: and yet, general, you mention it in such a manner, as would almost let a careless inattentive hearer go away with the persuasion that you disapprove of it. Speculative and dissatisfied men are existing in all countries; even in Spain and England: but we have scourges in store for the pruriency of dissatisfaction, and cases and caps for the telescopes of speculation.

LASCY.

The faultiness of the English laws is not complained of, nor pointed out, exclusively by the speculative or the sanguine, by the oppressed or the disappointed. It was the derision and scoff of George the second, one of the bravest and most constitutional kings.

"As to our laws," said he, "we pass near a hundred every session, which seem made for no other

purpose but to afford us the pleasure of breaking them."

This is not reported by Whig or Tory, who change principles as they change places, but by a dispassionate unambitious man, of sound sense and in easy circumstances, a personal and intimate friend of the king, from whose lips he himself received it . . . Lord Waldegrave.

Yet an Englishman thinks himself quite as free, and governed quite as rationally, as a citizen of the United States! So does a Chinese. Such is the hemlock that Habitude administers to Endurance; and so long is it, in this torpor, ere the heart sickens.

I am far from the vehemence of the English commander Nelson; a man however who betrayed neither in war nor policy any deficiency of acuteness and judgement. He says unambiguously and distinctly in his letters, *All ministers of kings and princes are in my opinion as great scoundrels as ever lived.*

Versatility, indecision, falsehood, ingratitude, had strongly marked, as he saw, the two principal ones of his country, Pitt and Fox; the latter of whom openly turned honesty into derision, while the former sent it wrapt up decently to market. Now if all ministers of kings and princes are, what the

sagacious and honest admiral calls them from his experience, *as great scoundrels as ever lived*, we must be as great fools as ever lived if we endure them: we should look for others.

MERINO.

Even that will not do: the new ones, possessing the same power and the same places, will be the same men.

LASCY.

I am afraid then the change must not be only in the servants, but in the masters, and that we must not leave the choice to those who always choose *as great scoundrels as ever lived*. Nelson was a person who had had very much to do with the ministers of kings and princes; none of his age had more; an age in which the ministers had surely no less to do, than those in any other age since the creation of the world: he was the best commander of his nation: he was consulted and employed in every difficult and doubtful undertaking: he must have known them thoroughly. What meaning then shall we attribute to his words? Shall we say that *as great scoundrels as ever lived* ought to govern the universe in perpetuity? or can we doubt that they must do so, if we suffer kings and princes to appoint them at each other's recommendation?

MERINO.

Nelson was a heretic, a blasphemer, a revolutionist.

LASCY.

On heresy and blasphemy I am incapable of deciding; but never was there a more strenuous antagonist of revolutionary principles; and upon this very rock his glory splitt and foundered. When sir William Hamilton declared to the Neapolitan insurgents who had laid down their arms before royal promises, that his government having engaged with all the allied powers to eradicate all revolutionary doctrines from Europe, he could not countenance the fulfilment of a capitulation which opposed the views of the *coalition*, what did Nelson? He tarnished the brightest sword in Europe, and devoted to the most insatiable of the Furies the purest blood! A Caroline and a Ferdinand, the most opprobrious of the human race, and among the lowest in intellect, were permitted to riot in the slaughter of a Caraccioli.

The English constitution, sir, is founded on revolutionary doctrines, and her kings acknowledge it. Recollect now the note of her diplomatist. Is England in Europe? If she is, which I venture not to assert, her rulers have declared their intention to eradicate the foundations of her liberties;

and they have broken their word so often, that I am inclined to believe they will attempt to recover their credit by keeping it strictly here. But the safest and least costly conquests for England, would be those over the understandings and the hearts of men. They require no garrisons; they equipp no navies; they encounter no tempests; they withdraw none from labour; they might extend from the arctic to the antarctic circle, leaving every Briton at his own fireside; and Earth like Ocean would have her great Pacific. The strength of England lies not in armaments and invasions: it lies in the omnipresence of her industry, and in the vivifying energies of her high civilization. There are provinces she cannot grasp; there are islands she cannot hold fast: but there is neither island nor province, there is neither kingdom nor continent, which she could not draw to her side and fix there everlastingly, by saying the magic words *be free*. Every land wherin she favours the sentiments of freedom, every land wherin she but forbids them to be stifled, is her own; a true allie, a willing tributary, an inseparable friend. Principles hold those together whom power would only alienate.

MERINO.

I understand little these novel doctrines: but Democracy herself must be contented with the

principal features of the English constitution. The great leaders are not taken from the ancient families.

LASCY.

These push forward into parliament young persons of the best talents they happen to pick up, whether at a ball or an opera, at a gaming-table or a college-mess, who from time to time, according to the offices they have filled, mount into the upper chamber and make room for others: but it is understood that, in both chambers, they shall distribute honours and places at the command of their patrons. True indeed, the ostensible heads are not of ancient or even of respectable parentage. The more wealthy and powerful peers send them from their boroughs into the house of commons, as they send race-horses from their stables to Newmarket, and cocks from their training-yards to Doncaster. This is, in like manner, a pride, a luxury, a speculation. Even bankrupts have been permitted to sit there, men who, when they succeded, were a curse to their country, worse than when they failed *.

Let us rather collect together our former insti-

* The opinions on our house of Commons which I have attributed to Lascy, are those of a contemptuous Spaniard, not perfectly well informed: we know better; but his character required them so.

tutions, cherish all that brings us proud remembrances, brace our limbs for the efforts we must make, train our youth on our own arena, and never deem it decorous to imitate the limp of a wrestler writhing in his decrepitude.

The chamber of peers in England is the dormitory of Freedom and of Genius. Those who enter it have eaten the lotus and forget their country. A minister, to suit his purposes, may make a dozen, or a score, or a hundred of peers in a day: if they are rich they are inactive; if they are poor they are dependent. In general he chooses the rich, who always want something; for wealth is less easy to satisfy than poverty, luxury than hunger: he can dispense with their energy if he can obtain their votes, and they never abandon him unless he has contented them.

MERINO.

Impossible! that any minister should make twenty, or even ten peers, during one convocation.

LASCY.

The English, by a most happy metaphor, call them *batches*, seeing so many drawn forth at a time, with all the rapidity of loaves from an oven, and moulded to the same ductility by less manipulation. A minister in that system has equally need of the active and the passive, as the creation

has equally need of males and females. Do not imagine I would discredit or depreciate the house of peers: never will another land contain one composed of characters in general more honorable; more distinguished for knowledge, for charity, for generosity, for equity; more perfect in all the duties of men and citizens. Let it stand: a nation should be accustomed to no changes, to no images but of strength and duration: let it stand then, as a lofty and ornamental belfry, never to be taken down or lowered, until it threatens by its decay the congregation underneath: but let none be excommunicated who refuse to copy it, whether from faultiness in their foundation, or from deficiency in their materials. Different countries require different governments. Is the rose the only flower in the garden? is Hesperus the only star in the heavens? We may be hurt by our *safe-guards*, if we try new ones.

Don Britomarte Delciego took his daily siesta on the grass, in the city-dyke of Barbastro. He shaded his face with his *sombrero*, and slept profoundly. One day unfortunately a gnat alighted on his nose, and bit it. Don Britomarte roused himself; and, remembering that he could enfold his arms in his mantle, took off a glove, and covered the unprotected part with it. Satisfied at the con-

trivance, he slept again; and more profoundly than ever. Whether there was any savoury odour in the glove I know not: certain it is, that some rats came from under the fortifications, and, perforating the new defence of Don Britomarte, made a deplorable breach in the salient angle which had suffered so lately by a less potent enemy; and he was called from that day forward *the knight of the kidskin vizor.*

MERINO.

Sir, I do not understand stories: I never found wit or reason in them.

LASCY.

England, in the last twenty years, has undergone a much greater revolution than any she struggled to counteract: a revolution more awful, more pernicious, more hopeless. Half a century ago she was represented chiefly by her country-gentlemen: Pitt made the richer, peers; the intermediate, pensioners; the poorer, exiles; and his benches were overflowed with Honorables from the sugar-cask and indigo-bag. He changed all the features both of mind and matter. Old mansions were converted into workhouses and barracks: children who returned from school at the holydays, stopped in their own villages, and asked why they stopped. More oaks followed him than ever followed Or-

pheus ; and more stones, a thousand to one, leaped down at his voice than ever leaped up at Amphion's. Overladen with taxation, the gentlemen of England, a class the grandest in character, that ever existed upon earth, the best informed, the most liberal, the most patriotic, were driven from their residences into cities. Their authority ceased; their example was altogether lost; and it appears by the calendars of the prisons, that two-thirds of the offenders were from the country; whereas, until these disastrous times, four-fifths were from the towns. To what a degree those of the towns themselves must have increased, may be supposed by the stagnation in many trades, and by the conversion of labourers and artisans to soldiers.

The country-gentlemen, in losing their rank and condition, lost the higher and more delicate part of their principles. There decayed at once in them that robustness and that nobility of character, which men, like trees, acquire from standing separately. Deprived of their former occupations and amusements, and impatient of inactivity, they condescended to be members of gaming-clubs in the fashionable cities, incurred new and worse expenses, and eagerly sought, from among the friendships they had contracted, those who might obtain for them, or for their families,

some atom from the public dilapidation. Hence nearly all were subservient to the minister: those who were not so, were marked out as disaffected to the constitution, or at best as singular men who courted celebrity from retirement.

Such was the state of the landed interest; and what was that of the commercial? Industrious tradesmen speculated; in other words, gamed. Bankers were coiners, not giving a piece of metal, but a scrap of paper. They who had thousands, lent millions, and lost all. Slow and sure gains were discreditable; and nothing was a sight more common, more natural, or seen with more indifference, than fortunes rolling down from their immense accumulation. Brokers and insurers and jobbers, people whose education could not have been liberal, were now for the first time found at the assemblies and at the tables of the great, and were treated there with the first distinction. Every hand thro which money passes was prest affectionately. The viler part of what is democratical was supported by the aristocracy; the better of what is republican was thrown down. England, like one whose features are just now turned awry by an apoplexy, is ignorant of the change she has undergone, and is the more lethargic the more she is distorted. Not only her bloom and spirit, but

her form and gait are altered; and we may see, the weakest of mortals was omnipotent in parliament. He dreamed in his drunkenness that he could compress the spirit of the times, and he rendered the wealthiest of nations the most distrest. The spirit of the times is only to be made useful by catching it as it rises, to be managed only by concession, to be controlled only by compliancy. Like the powerful agent of late discovery, that impells vast masses across the ocean, or raises them from the abysses of the earth, it performs everything by attention, nothing by force, and is fatal not only from coercion but from neglect. That government is the best which the people obey the most willingly and the most wisely: that state of society, in which the greatest number may live and educate their families becomingly, by unstrained bodily, and unrestricted intellectual exertion; where superiority in office springs from worth, and where the chief magistrate has no higher interest in perspective, than the ascendency of the laws. Nations are not ruined by wars: for convents and churches, palaces and cities, are not nations. The Messenians, and Jews, and Araucanians, saw their houses and temples leveled with the pavement: the mightiness of the crash gave the stronger mind a fresh impulse, and it sprang high above the flames

that consumed the last fragment. The ruin of a country is not the blight of corn, nor the weight and impetuosity of hailstones; it is not inundation nor storm, it is not pestilence nor famine; a few years, perhaps a single one, may cover all traces of such calamity: but that country is too surely ruined, in which morals are lost irretrievably to the greater part of the rising generation: and there are they about to sink and perish, where the ruler has given, by an unrepressed and an unreproved example, the lesson of bad faith.

MERINO.

Sir, I cannot hear such language.

LASCY.

Why then converse with me? Is the fault mine if such language be offensive? Why should intolerance hatch an hypothesis, or increase her own alarm by the obstreperous chuckle of incubation?

MERINO.

Kings stand in the place of God amongst us.

LASCY.

I wish they would make way for the owner. They love God only when they fancy he has favoured their wild passions, and fear him only when they must buy him off. If indeed they be his vicegerents on earth, let them repress the

wicked and exalt the virtuous. Wherever in the material world there is a grain of gold, it sinks to the bottom; chaff floats over it: in the animal, the greatest and most sagacious of creatures hide themselves in woods and caverns, in morasses and in solitudes, and we hear first of their existence when we find their bones. Do you perceive a resemblance anywhere? If princes are desirous to imitate the Governor of the universe, if they are disposed to obey him, if they consult religion or reason, or, what oftener occupies their attention, the stability of power, they will admitt the institutions best adapted to render men honest and peaceable, industrious and contented. Otherwise, let them be certain that, altho they themselves may escape the chastisement they merit, their children and granchildren will never be out of danger or out of fear. Calculations on the intensity of force are often just, hardly ever so those on its durability.

MERINO.

As if truly that depended on men! a blow against a superintending Providence! It always follows the pestilential breath that would sully the majesty of kings.

LASCY.

Señor Merino, my name, if you have forgotten

it, is Lascy: take courage and recollect yourself. The whole of my discourse has tended to keep the majesty of kings unsullied, by preserving their honour inviolate. Any blow against a superintending Providence is too insane for reproach, too impotent for pity: and indeed what peril can by any one be apprehended for the Almighty, when he has the curate Merino to preach for him, and the Holy Inquisition to protect him?

MERINO.

I scorn the sneer, sir! and know not by what right, or after what resemblance, you couple my name with the *Holy Inquisition;* which our lord the king in his wisdom has not yet reestablished, and which the *Holy Allies* for the greater part have abolished in their dominions.

LASCY.

This never would have been effected, if the holy heads of the meek usurpers had not raised themselves above the crown; proving from doctors and confessors, from old testament and new, the privilege they possessed, of whipping and burning and decapitating the wearer. The kings in their fright ran against the chalice of poison, by which many thousands of their subjects had perished, and by which their own hands were, after their retractings and writhings, ungauntleted, undirked, and paralysed.

Europe, Asia, America, sent up simultaneously to heaven a shout of joy at the subversion: Africa, seated among tamer monsters, and addicted to milder superstitions, wondered, at what burst and dayspring of beatitude, the human race was celebrating around her so high and enthusiastic a jubilee.

MERINO.

I take my leave, general. May your Excellency live many years!... I breathe the pure street-air again... Traitor and atheist! I will denounce him: he has shaved for the last time: he shall never have Christian burial.

I wrote an inscription for the cenotaph of Lascy, which I will insert here, together with some others composed for those who have fallen the first victims of the Holy Alliance or its priests.

Pro Cœnotaphio Lacii ducis.

IN . MINORI . BALEARIUM . JACET . CORPUS . LACII
PRAECLARI . DUCIS . VIRI . INTEGERRIMI
CUJUS . SI . PATRIAM . ET . RES . GESTAS
ET . GERENDARUM . CONSIDERES . CAUSAS
NECESSE . NON . EST . ADDERE
FUISSE . REGIO . FERNANDI . JUSSU
QUEM . SALVUM . FECERAT . INTEREMPTUM
HOC . HABE . LECTOR
QUOD . PERCUSSORIBUS . ET . REGE . VIVENTIBUS
UBI . DEBET . INSCRIBI . NON . POTEST
VOS . AUTEM . QUI . VOBIS . LIBERTATEM
IN . ALTERA . TERRARUM . PARTE . VINDICATIS
RECORDAMINI . HUNC . MERITIS . VESTRUM . ESSE
ATQUE . ITA . VOS . ET . CONJUGES . ET . LIBEROS
JUVET . DEUS
STATUAM . EJUS . PRO . FOCIS . PONITOTE.

Pro Cœnotaphio Porlierii ducis.

SUB . MARMORE . HOC . JACERET
SI . SINERET . REX . FERNANDUS
CADAVER . TRUNCUM . PORLIERII
PRO . EODEM . REGE . DIMICABAT . QUI
DUM . E . TYRANNI . VICINI . MULIERIBUS . COGNATIS
IN . MATRIMONIUM . DARI . QUAMLIBET . SIBI . PETERET
DOLO . CAPTUS . EST . ET . IN . GALLIAM . VI . ABDUCTUS
GALLICO . EXERCITU . A . BRITANNIS . DELETO
IPSO . AUTEM . FERNANDO . LIBERATO
JURAVIT . LEGES . PATRIAE . PRISTINAS . RESTITUERE
NE . FALSO . JURARET . REX
PUGNATURUS . ERAT . ITERUM . PORLIERIUS
QUAEDAM . EST . PRUDENTIA
QUAE . NEC . STRENUIS . NEC . PROBIS
CONVENIT . ET . PORLIERIO . SOLA . DEFUIT
CUM . OMNIBUS . AD . XXX . CAPITUM . MILLIA
QUI . COLUERANT . LITERAS
VEL . PATRUM . CONSULTA . SERVARANT
VEL . SANGUINEM . SUUM . PRO . FERNANDO
DEVOVERANT . PRIMI . FUDERANTQUE
VINCTUS . EST . CLUSUS . IN . CARCERE . AMICIS . LIBRIS
VITAE . DENIQUE . OMNI . COMMODO
OMNI . CONSOLATIONE . PRIVATUS
ET . NECE . VIOLENTA . ATQUE
ID . SI . BONIS . ACCIDERE . QUEAT . INFAMI
JUSSU . FERNANDI . SUI . TRUCIDATUS.

REPUTATE . VOBISCUM . REGES . VICTORES
PUBLICI . UT . VULTIS . APPELLARI . JURIS . VINDICES
INDIGNA . PERPETI . VOS . HAUD . SOLOS . POSSE
PECCARE . HAUD . SOLAM . LIBERTATEM.

Pro lapdie Calvi Rosatis.

CALVUS . ROSAS

QUUM . TORMENTO . ALLIGATUS . ESSET . QUUMQUE ARTUUM . NEXUS . DIRUMPERENTUR . NEC . TAMEN DESPONDERET . ANIMUM . NEC . VOCEM . EMITTERET ROGATUS . A . CARNIFICE . ET . A . SACRIFICULO . NUMQUID . FATERETUR . POSSE . ENIM . SI . VELLET LOQUI . . . . HOC . POSSUM . INQUIT . . . . CALVUS . ROSAS EADEM . CONSTANTIA . MEMBRIS . OMNIBUS . FRACTIS MORITURUS . EST . QUA . CAESAREAM . AUGUSTAM DEFENDIT . ET . AD . ULTIMUM . USQUE . VITAE SPIRITUM . TYRANNORUM . LIBIDINI . OBSISTET . DERIDEBIT . IMPOTENTIAM

PROGREDERE . SI . CIVIS . ES . ET . ESSE . TANTI GAUDE. SI . PEREGRINUS . ES . PARCE . LAPIDI.

Pro lapide Zorraquinis.

ZORRAQUIN . DUX . HEIC . JACET

.PUD . VICUM . UT . DICITUR . [URBS . EST . MUNITA]

TARRACONENSEM

..GALLIS.VULNERATUS.AD.ATHANAGIAM.ASPORTATUS

IN . SINUM . LACRYMAS . QUUM . ACCEPISSET

IMPERATORIS . MINÆ

QUAS . PRIMAS . POST . INFANTIAM

VIR . CONSTANS . FUDERAT

ATRIÆ . VITAM . DEDIT . EJUSDEMQUE . MEMORIAM.

Pro monumento super milites regis jussu interemptos.

VIATOR

OSSA . QUAE . CALCAS

REGIS . FERNANDI . JUSSU

FRACTA . TORMENTIS . ERANT

PRO . PARENTIBUS . ET . LIBERIS

PRO . ARIS . ET . FOCIS

PRO . LEGIBUS . ET . REGE . PUGNAVIMUS

EMERITI . LUBENTER . QUIESCEREMUS

LIBERTATE . PARTA

QUIESCIMUS . AMISSA . PERLUBENTER.

CONVERSATION VI.

PERICLES

AND

SOPHOCLES.

PERICLES

AND

SOPHOCLES.

PERICLES.

O SOPHOCLES! is there in the world a city so beautiful as Athens? Congratulate me, embrace me; the Pireus and the Pœcile are completed this day *; my glory is accomplished; behold it founded on the supremacy of our fellow-citizens.

* Their decorations only; for the structures were finished before. The propylea of Pericles were entrances to the citadel: other works of consummate beauty were erected as decorations to the city, but chiefly in the Pœcile, where also was seen the temple of Cybele, and her statue by Phidias. All the public works of London, and of Paris, would not form a third of the Pireus, the length of which exceded six miles, the highth was sixty feet, not reckoning the foundation, and the breadth at top about twelve: it was of square stones, fastened together by cramps of iron and insertions of lead: it

SOPHOCLES.

And it arises, O Pericles, the more majestically from the rich and delightful plain of equal laws.

was continued by two walls, one of four miles, the other somewhat less, each adorned with statues.

The Romans did less in their city than in their colonies. The greatest of their works was their wall against the Caledonians, the most majestic and solid was their bridge across the Danube. In theatres they excelled the Athenians; those at Athens were worthy of Pollio and Seneca, those at Rome of Eschylus and Sophocles. The Romans at all periods have built out of ruins. A band of robbers and outcasts found on the banks of the Tiber a city so little dilapidated, that it served them to inhabit: a place which some pestilence had devastated, or which the inhabitants had abandoned for its insalubrity. They roofed the houses with sedge and rushes, contracted the vast circumference of the walls, and amid these occupations grew somewhat more orderly and civilized. As however from their habits of life they had brought few women with them, these they took by fraud and violence from their unwarlike neighbours. The Italians, who, whatever the Roman historians, to increase the glory of the conqueror, may represent them, were always the least martial and the least enterprising of the Europeans, could not recover their wives and daughters, and soon made peace with their violators. No splendid house, no ample temple, was erected for five hundred years: so barbarous was the genius of the people. The magnificence of Corinth and of Syracuse, the two most elegant and splendid cities that ever rose from the earth, had left no impression on their conquerors: their cups were of gold, while their temples and the Gods within them were of stone and

The Gods have bestowed on our statuaries and painters a mighty power, enabling them to restore clay. Lucullus was the first amongst them who had any idea of magnificence in architecture. Julius Cesar, to whom Glory in all her forms was more familiar than his own Penates, fell a victim to his ambition, and left nothing memorable in Rome but Pompey's statue. Augustus did somewhat in adorning the city; but Augustus was no Pericles. Tiberius, melancholy at the loss of a wife torn away from him by policy, sank into that dreadful malady which invaded all branches of the Claudian family, and, instead of embellishing Rome, darkened it with disquietudes and suspicions, and retired into a solitude which his enemies have peopled with monsters, such as, reason and reflexion must convince us, were incompatible with the tenderness of his grief; and his mental powers were not always estranged. Nero, a most virtuous and beneficent prince, was soon affected by the same insanity, acting differently on his heart and intellect; he never lost sight of magnificence; he erected a palace before which all the splendours of Pericles fade away. Plutarch tells us, in the life of Publicola, that he had seen at Athens the columns of Pentelican marble for the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; that their thickness was reduced at Rome, to the great injury of their proportions; and that the gilding of the whole edifice cost twelve thousand talents, above two millions sterling. There were rooms in the palace of Nero as large, the ground on which it stood was thirty times the extent, the gilding as rich or richer. The masters of the world trembled to enter it, and commanded its destruction, removed the works of Phidias and of Praxiteles, of Scopas and of Lysippus, of Apelles and of Zeuxis, of which probably all that were extant were assembled here, poured

our ancestors unto us, some in the calm of thought, others in the tumult of battle, and to present them before our children when we are gone.

forth the lava of gold, from its cielings, its arches, and its architraves, and constructed out of its kitchens and stables a bath and amphitheatre for the Roman people. The conflagration of Rome, if the mention of it may be admitted here, I believe to have arisen from the same cause as the conflagration of London, the necessity of purifying the city after an endemical disease, and of leaving no narrow streets in the centre for its recurrence. The extreme love which the populace bore toward Nero during his whole life, and long afterwards, is a proof that they did not attribute it to his cruelty and caprice, and that the losses of all were abundantly recompensed by his wealth and liberality. Nothing was left for Hadrian but to copy the finer works of the Athenians, which he brought together under his eye. Architecture then sank for ages.

The Moors introduced a kind of civility far preferable to any in existence among the later Romans, and a style of architecture more fanciful and ornamental, which also had this advantage, that it brought with it no recollections or ideas of deterioration and decline. The cathedrals in Spain are the most exquisite models of it; and illuminated books, which the Arabs, Turks, and Persians, still prize highly, gave, I imagine, those ideas on which the English raised so many noble edifices in their own country and in France, correcting by them the heavier and more confused masses of Italy; a style which still prevails.

Parcius ista Italis tamen objicienda.

PERICLES.

Shall it be so? Alas, how worthless an incumbrance, how wearisome an impediment is life, if it separate us from the better of our ancestors, not

In London with St. Paul's and St. Stephen's before us, in Bath with Queen's-square, the Crescent, and the Circus (to which last nothing in Rome or in the world is equal), we build cottages like castles, and palaces like cottages; and where the edifice is plain and simple, the window is a hole knocked in the wall, looking like an eye without eyebrow or lashes, or else is situated in the midst of an arch, as if a ruin had been patched up to receive it.

Let us reflect one moment more on Athens. A city not much larger than Liverpool or Bristol, and all whose inhabitants might have been lost in Syracuse, produced within the short period of two centuries, reckoning from the battle of Marathon, a greater number of exquisite models in war, philosophy, patriotism, eloquence, and poetry; in the semi-mechanical arts which always accompany or follow them, sculpture and painting; and in the first of the mechanical, architecture, than all the remainder of the universe in six thousand years. She rises up again, and is pushed back by common consent. The rulers of nations seem to think they have as much interest in abolishing all traces of her, if they can, as Alexander had to demolish (which he did) the monuments of the Argonautic expedition. Darius thought differently: had he less or more to fear? He established and cemented, by means of Mardonius, a republican form of government in all the Grecian cities of Ionia... There is policy in content, both in keeping and in causing it.

in our existences only, but in our merits! We are little by being seen among men; because that phasis of us only is visible which is exposed towards them and which most resembles them: we become greater by leaving the world, as the sun appears to be on descending below the horizon. Strange reflexion! humiliating truth! that nothing on earth, no exertion, no endowment, can do so much for us as a distant day. And deep indeed, O Sophocles, must be the impression made upon thy mind by these masterly works of art, if they annihilate in a manner all the living; if they lower in thee that spirit, which hath often aroused by one touch, or rather flash, the whole Athenian people at thy tragedies, and force upon thee the cold and ungenial belief, the last which it appears to be their nature to inculcate, that while our children are in existence it can cease to be amongst them.

SOPHOCLES.

I am only the interpreter of the heroes and divinities who are looking down on me. When I survey them I remember their actions, and when I depart from them I visit the regions they illustrated.

Neither the Goddesses on Ida nor the Gods before Troy were such rivals as our artists. Eschylus

hath surpast me*: I must excell Eschylus. O Pericles, thou conjurest up Discontent from the bosom of Delight, and givest her an elevation of mien and character she never knew before: thou makest every man greater than his neighbour, and not in his own eyes but in another's. We still want historians: thy eloquence will form the style, thy administration will supply the materials. Beware, O my friend, lest the people hereafter be too proud of their city, and imagine that to have been born in Athens is enough.

PERICLES.

And this indeed were hardly more irrational, than the pride which cities take sometimes in the accident of a man's birth within their walls, of a citizen's whose experience was acquired, whose virtues were fostered, and perhaps whose services were performed, elsewhere.

SOPHOCLES.

They are proud of having been the cradles of

* Sophocles gained the first prize for which he contended with Eschylus, and was conscious that he had not yet deserved the superiority, which enthusiasm on the one side and jealousy on the other are always ready to grant a vigorous young competitor. The character of Sophocles was frank and liberal on all occasions, and was remarkably proved so on the death of his last rival Euripides.

great men, then only, when great men can be no longer an incumbrance or a reproach to them. Let them rather boast of those who spend the last day in them than the first: this is always accidental, that is generally by choice; for, from something like instinct, we wish to close our eyes upon the world in the places we love best, the child in its mother's bosom, the patriot in his country. When we are born we are the same as all others: at our decease we may induce our friends, and oblige our enemies, to acknowledge that all others are not the same as we. It is folly to say, Death levels the whole human race: for it is only when he hath stript men of every thing external, that their deformities can be clearly discovered or their worth correctly ascertained. Gratitude is soon silent; a little while longer and Ingratitude is tired, is satisfied, is exhausted, or sleeps; lastly fly off the fumes of partyspirit, the hottest and most putrid ebullition of selflove. We then see before us, and contemplate calmly, the creator of our customs, the ruler of our passions, the arbiter of our pleasures, and, under the Gods, the disposer of our destiny. What then, I pray thee, is there dead? nothing more than that which we can handle, cast down, bury; and surely not he who is yet to progenerate a more numerous

and far better race, than during the few years it was permitted us to converse with him.

PERICLES.

When I reflect on Themistocles, on Aristides, and on the greatest of mortal men, Miltiades, I wonder how their countrymen can repeat their names, unless in performing the office of expiation*.

SOPHOCLES.

Cities are ignorant that nothing is more disgraceful to them, than to be the birthplaces of the illustriously good, and not afterwards the places of

* There are some who may deem this reflexion unsuitable to the character of Pericles. He saw injustice in others, and hated it; yet he caused the banishment of Cimon, as great a man as any of the three: it is true he had afterwards the glory of proposing, and of carrying to Sparta, the decree of his recall. Let us contemplate the brighter side of his character, such as it appeared at the time when I describe it, his eloquence, his wit, his clemency, his judgement and firmness in friendship, his regularity, his decorousness, his domesticity; let us then unite him with his predecessor, and acknowledge that such illustrious rivals never met before or since, in enmity or in friendship.

Could the piety attributed to Pericles have belonged to a scholar of Anaxagoras? Eloquent men often talk like religious men: and where could the eloquence of Pericles be more enflamed by enthusiasm, than in the midst of his propylea, at the side of Sophocles, and before the Gods of Phidias?

their residence; that their dignity consists in adorning them with distinctions, in entrusting to them the regulation of the commonwealth, and not in having sold a crust or cordial to the nurse or midwife.

PERICLES.

O Jove and Minerva! grant a right mind to the Athenians! If, throughout so many and such eventful ages, they have been found by you deserving of their freedom, render them more and more worthy of the great blessing you bestowed on them! May the valour of our children defend this mole for ever; and constantly may their patriotism increase and strengthen among these glorious reminiscences! Shield them from the jealousy of neighbouring states, from the ferocity of barbarian kings, and from the perfidy of those who profess the same religion! Teach them that between the despot and the free all compact is a cable of sand, and alliance most unholy! and, O givers of power and wisdom! remove from them the worst and wildest of illusions, that happiness, liberty, virtue, genius, will be fostered or long respected, much less attain their just ascendency, under any other form of government!

SOPHOCLES.

May the Gods hear thee, Pericles, as they have

always done! or may I, reposing in my tomb, never know that they have not heard thee!

I smile on imagining how trivial would thy patriotism and ideas of government appear to Chlorus. And indeed much wiser men, from the prejudices of habit and education, have undervalued them, preferring the dead quiet of their wintry hives to our breezy spring of life and busy summer. The countries of the vine and olive are more subject to hailstorms than the regions of the north: yet is it not better that some of the fruit should fall than that none should ripen?

PERICLES.

Quit these creatures; let them lie warm and slumber: they are all they ought to be, all they can be: but prythee who is Chlorus, that he should deserve to be named by Sophocles?

SOPHOCLES.

He was born somewhere on the opposite coast of Eubœa, and sold as a slave in Persia, to a man who dealt largely in that traffic, and who also had made a fortune, by displaying to the public four remarkable proofs of ability: first, by swallowing at a draught an amphora of the strongest wine; secondly, by standing up erect and modulating his voice like a sober man when he was drunk;

thirdly, by acting to perfection like a drunken man when he was sober; and fourthly, by a most surprising trick indeed, which, it is reported, he learnt in Babylonia: one would have sworn he had a blazing fire in his mouth; take it out, and it is nothing but a lump of ice. The king, before whom he was admitted to play his tricks, hated him at first, and told him that the last conjuror had made him cautious of such people, he having been detected in filching from a royal tiara one of the weightiest jewels... but talents forced their way. As for Chlorus, I mention him by the name under which I knew him; he has changed it since: for altho the dirt wherewith it was encrusted kept him comfortable at first, when it cracked and began to crumble it was incommodious.

The barbarians have commenced, I understand, to furbish their professions and vocations with rather whimsical skirts and linings: thus for instance a chessplayer is *lion-hearted* and *worshipful;* a drunkard is *serenity* and *highness;* a hunter of fox, badger, polecat, fitchew, and weazel, is *excellency* and *right honorable;* while, such is the delicacy of distinction, a rat-catcher is considerably less: he however is *illustrious*, and appears, as a tail to a comet, in the train of a legation, holding a pen between his teeth, to denote his

capacity for secretary, and leading a terrier in the right hand, and carrying a trap baited with cheese and anise-seed in the left.

It is as creditable among them to lie with dexterity, as it is common among the Spartans to steal. Chlorus, who performed it with singular frankness and composure, had recently a cock's feather mounted on his turban, in place of a hen's, and the people was commanded to address him by the title of *most noble*. His brother Alexaretes was employed at a stipend of four talents to detect an adultress in one among the royal wives: he gave no intelligence in the course of several months: at last the king, seeing him on his return, cried angrily, *What hast thou been doing? hast thou never found her out?* He answered, *Thy servant, O king, hath been doing more than finding out an adultress: he hath, O king, been making one.*

PERICLES.

I have heard the story, with this difference, that the bed-embassador being as scantily gifted with spirit and facetiousness as with perspicacity and attention, the reply was framed satirically by some other courtier, who, imitating his impudence, had forgotten his incapacity. But about the reward of falsehood, that is wonderful, when we read that

formerly the Persians were occupied many years in the sole study of truth.

SOPHOCLES.

How difficult then must they have found it! no wonder they left it off the first moment they could conveniently. The granfather of Chlorus was honest: he carried a pack upon his shoulders, in which pack were contained the coarser linens of Caria: these he retailed among the villages of Asia and Greece, but principally in the islands. He died: on the rumour of war, the son and granson, then an infant, fled: the rest is told. In Persia no man inquires how another comes to wealth or power, the suddenness of which appears to be effected by some of the demons or genii of their songs and stories. Chlorus grew rich, emancipated from slavery, and bought several slaves himself. One of these was excessively rude and insolent to me: I had none near enough to chastise him, so that I requested of his master, by a friend, to admonish and correct him at his leisure. My friend informs me that Chlorus, crossing his legs, and drawing his cock's feather thro the thumb and finger, asked languidly who I was, and receiving the answer, said, *I am surprised at his impudence. Pericles himself could have demanded nothing more.* My friend remarked that Sopho-

cles was no less sensible of an affront than Pericles. *True*, replied he, *but he has not the talent of expressing his sense of it quite so strongly. For an affront to Pericles, who could dreadfully hurt me, I would have imprisoned my whole gang, whipt them with wires, mutilated them, turned their bodies into safes for bread and water, or cooled their prurient tongues with hemlock: but Dorkas shall never shrug a shoulder the sorer, or eat a leek the less, for Sophocles.*

PERICLES.

The ideas of such a man on government must be curious: I am persuaded he would far preferr the Persian to any... I forgot to mention that, according to what I hear this morning, the great king has forbidden all ships to sail within thirty parasangs of his coasts, and has also claimed the dominion of half ours.

SOPHOCLES.

Where is the scourge with which Xerxes lashed the ocean? were it not better laid on the shoulders of a madman than placed within his hand?

PERICLES.

It has been observed by those who look deeply into the history of physics, that all royal families become at last insane. Immoderate power, like other intemperance, leaves the progeny weaker and

weaker, until Nature, as in compassion, covers it with her mantle and it is seen no more, or until the arm of indignant man sweeps it from before him.

We must, ere long, excite the other barbarians to invade the territories of this, and before the cement of his new acquisitions shall have hardened. Large conquests break readily off from an empire, by their weight, while smaller stick fast. A wide and rather waste kingdom should be interposed between the policied states and Persia... by the leave of Chlorus. Perhaps he would rather, in his benevolence, unite us with the great and happy family of his master: perhaps you or I, my Sophocles, may be invited to repose our legs a little in the same stocks with Dorkas, or even to eat at the same table. Despots are wholesale dealers in equality; and, father Jupiter! was ever equality like this?

SOPHOCLES.

After all, my dear Pericles... do excuse my smile... is not that the best government, which, whatever be the form of it, we ourselves are called upon to administer?

PERICLES.

The Pireus and the Pœcile have a voice of their own, wherewith to answer thee, O Sophocles! and the Athenians, exempt from war, famine,

taxes, debts, exiles, fines, imprisonment, delivered from monarchy, from oligarchy, and from anarchy, walking along their porticoes, inhaling their sea-breezes, crowning their Gods daily for fresh blessings, and their children for deserving them, reply to this voice by the symphony of their applause ... Hark! my words are not idle. Hither come the youths and virgins, the sires and matrons; hither come citizen and soldier...

SOPHOCLES.

A solecism from Pericles! Has the most eloquent of men forgotten the Attic language? has he forgotten the language of all Greece? can the father of his country be ignorant that he should have said hither *comes?* for citizen and soldier is one.

PERICLES.

The fault is graver than the reproof, or indeed than simple incorrectness of language: my eyes misled my tongue: a large portion of the citizens is armed.

O what an odour of thyme and bay and myrtle, and from what a distance, bruized by the procession!

SOPHOCLES.

What regular and full harmony! What a splen-

dour and effulgence of white dresses! painful to aged eyes and dangerous to young.

PERICLES.

I can distinguish many voices from among others: some of them have blest me for defending their innocence before the judges; some for exhorting Greece to unanimity; some for my choice of friends. Ah surely those sing sweetest! those are the voices, O Sophocles! that shake my heart with tenderness, a tenderness passing love, and excite it above the trumpet and the cymbal. Return we to the Gods: the crowd is waving the branches of olive, calling us by name, and closing to salute us.

SOPHOCLES.

O citadel of Minerva, more than all other citadels, may the Goddess of wisdom and of war protect thee! and never may strange tongue be heard within thy walls, unless from captive king!

Live, Pericles! and inspire into thy people the soul that once animated these heroes round us.

Hail, men of Athens! pass onward; leave me; I follow. Go; behold the Gods, the Demigods, and Pericles!

The colours of thy waves are not the same
Day after day, O Neptune! nor the same
The fortunes of the land wherefrom arose
Under thy trident the brave friend of man.
Wails have been heard from women, sterner breasts
Have sounded with the desperate pang of grief,
Grey hairs have strewn these rocks: here Egeus cried,

"O Sun! careering o'er the downs of Sipylus,
If desolation (worse than ever there
Befell the mother, and those heads her own
Would shelter, when the deadly darts flew round)
Impend not o'er my house, in gloom so long,
Let one swift cloud illumined by thy chariot
Sweep off the darkness from that doubtful sail?"

Deeper and deeper came the darkness down;
The sail itself was heard; his eyes grew dim:
His knees tottered beneath him ... but availed
To bear him till he plunged into the deep.

Sound, fifes! there is a youthfulness of sound
In your shrill voices ... sound again, ye lips
That Mars delights in ... I will look no more
Into the times behind for idle goads
To stimulate faint fancies ... hope itself
Is bounded by the starry zone of glory;
On one bright point we gaze, one wish we breathe:

Athens! be ever, as thou art this hour,
Happy and strong, a Pericles thy guide.

The Persian despots contented themselves with debasing the souls of the nations they had enslaved; but do not appear to have been very covetous of their purses. Herodotus calls their taxation of the Ionian states a tranquilizing and pacificatory measure. In this respect the world has grown wiser as it has grown older. No portion of the globe was more advantageously situated for commerce, than the Greek republics of Asia Minor; no soil richer, no climate healthier, no people more industrious. The Eolians, Ionians, and Dorians, together with Pamphylia, Lycia, and the islands of Rhodes, Cos, Samos, Chios, and Sestos, in the whole exceding four hundred miles by forty, were taxed unalterably at four hundred talents, about one hundred and five thousand pounds, by Darius, *according to a scale submitted to their deputies,* by his brother Artaxerxes. Italy, in the time of Nero, contained, at the lowest calculation, twentysix millions of inhabitants, and did not pay so much in taxes as the city of London, with its appertenances, in the late war. Appian states that Pompeius imposed on the Syrians and Cilicians a *hundredth* of their income. Hadrian was accused of great severity toward the Jews, for having somewhat augmented the rate which Vespasian had fixt, and which, according to Zonaras and Xiphilinus, was two drachmas on each, about eighteen pence. Strabo remarks that Egypt brought a revenue of one hundred and eighty thousand pounds to the father of Cleopatra, which sum Augustus doubled. Paterculus says, that Gaul paid more than Egypt. According to Suetonius and Eutropius, Cesar imposed on Gaul a tax of twentyfour thousand pounds, which Lipsius thinks an error, and without any reason or authority quadruples the amount. He estimates the revenue drawn by Rome from Asia, Spain, Greece, Illyria, and the other provinces, at six millions sterling. He inclines to exaggeration,

and relies too fondly, here and elsewhere, on his own unsupported and somewhat defective judgement. Plutarch, in the life of Pompeius, informs us that he levied from Asia one hundred and ninetytwo thousand pounds. Marcus Antonius exacted from the same country, at one time, the tribute of ten years, about three million six hundred thousand pounds, reproaching the nations that they had paid as much to Brutus and Cassius in two. When Augustus was declared commander in chief against him, the senate, according to Xiphilinus, ordered that all citizens and others should pay a *property-tax of a twentieth*, and that all senators should besides pay four oboli (sixpence) for each chimney. Dion Cassius goes further; and adds that they also paid two oboli for every *tile* of their houses both in town and country. This, if ever done at all, was done but once. I believe it to be a project never carried into execution, since it would amount (altho for once only) to nearly as much as a year's window-tax would have done in England, even if the richer had been liable to it in the same proportion as the poorer, and this the Romans would not have suffered. Antonius and Augustus were the first that imposed a tax on slaves: it amounted to less than ten shillings for each. When they imposed one upon wills, it caused an insurrection.

We are better subjects than the Romans of those times were, altho they enjoyed under an *holy alliance* the benefits of regular government, and had been accustomed to the salutary discipline of proscription.

CONVERSATION VII.

LOUIS XIV.

AND

FATHER LA CHAISE.

LOUIS XIV

AND

FATHER LA CHAISE.

LOUIS.

FATHER, there is one thing which I never have confessed; sometimes considering it almost as a light matter, and sometimes seeing it in its true colours. In my wars against the Dutch I committed an action ...

LA CHAISE.

Sire, the ears of the Lord are always open to those who confess their sins to their confessor. Cruelties and many other bad deeds are perpetrated in war, at which we should shudder in our houses at Paris.

LOUIS.

The people who were then in their houses did shudder, poor devils! It was ludicrous to see how such clumsy figures skipped, when the bombs fell

among their villages, in which the lower part of the habitations was under water, and children looked from the upper windows, between the legs of calves and lambs, and of the old household dog, struggling to free himself, as less ignorant of his danger. Loud shrieks were sometimes heard, when the artillery and other implements of war were silent: for fevers raged within their insulated walls, and wives execrated their husbands, with whom they had lived in concord and tenderness many years, when the father enforced the necessity of throwing their dead infant into the lake below. Our young soldiers on such occasions exercised their dexterity, and took their choice; for the whole family was assembled at the casement, and prayers were read over the defunct, accompanied with some firm and with some faultering responses.

By these terrible examples God punished their heresy.

LA CHAISE.

The Lord of Hosts is merciful: he protected your Majesty in the midst of these terrors.

LOUIS.

He sustained my strength, kept up my spirits, and afforded me every day some fresh amusement, in the midst of this rebellious and blasphemous people, who regularly, a quarter before twelve

o'clock, knowing that mass was then performed amongst us, sang their psalms.

LA CHAISE.

I cannot blame a certain degree of severity on such occasions: on much slighter, we read in the Old Testament, nations were smitten with the edge of the sword.

LOUIS.

I have wanted to find that place, but my Testament was not an old one: it was printed at the Louvre in my own time. As for the edge of the sword, it was not always convenient to use that; they are stout fellows: but our numbers enabled us to starve them out, and we had more engineers, and better. Besides which, I took peculiar vengeance on some of the principal families, and on some among the most learned of their professors: for if any had a dissolute son, who, as dissolute sons usually are, was the darling of the house, I bribed him, made him drunk, and converted him. This occasionally broke the father's heart: God's punishment of stubbornness!

LA CHAISE.

Without the especial grace of the Holy Spirit, such conversions are transitory. It is requisite to secure the soul while we have it, by the exertion of a little loving-kindness. I would deliver the

poor stray creatures up to their Maker straitway, lest he should call me to account for their backsliding. Heresy is a leprosy, which the whiter it is the worse it is. Those who appear the most innocent and godly, are the very men who do the most mischief, and hold the fewest observances. They hardly treat God Almighty like a gentleman, grudge him a clean napkin at his own table, and spend less upon him than upon a christmas dinner.

LOUIS.

O father La Chaise! you have searched my heart; you have brought to light my hidden offences. Nothing is concealed from your penetration. I come forth like a criminal in his chains.

LA CHAISE.

Confess, sire, confess! I will pour the oil into your wounded spirit, taking due care that the vengeance of heaven be satisfied by your atonement.

LOUIS.

Intelligence was brought to me that the cook of the English general had prepared a superb dinner, in consequence of what that insolent and vainglorious people are in the habit of calling a success. *We shall soon see,* exclamed I, *who is successful: God protects France.* The whole army shouted, and, I verily believe, at that moment would

have conquered the world. I deferred it: my designs lie in my own breast. Father, I never heard such a shout in my life: it reminded me of Cherubim and Seraphim and Arcangels. The infantry cried with joy, the horses capered and neighed, and broke wind right and left, from an excess of animation. Leopard-skins, bear-skins, Genoa velvet, Mechlin ruffles, Brussels cravats, feathers and fringes and golden bands, up in the air at once; pawings and snortings, threats and adjurations, beginnings and ends of songs. I was Henry and Cesar, and Alexander and David, and Charlemagne and Agamemnon ... I had only to give the word; they would swim across the Channel, and bring the tyrant of proud Albion back in chains. All my prudence was requisite to repress their ardour.

A letter had been intercepted by my scouts, addressed by the wife of the English general to her husband. She was at Gorcum: she informed him that she would send him a glorious *mincepie*, for his dinner the following day, in celebration of his victory. *Devil incarnate*, said I on reading the despatch, *I will disappoint thy malice.* I was so enraged, that I went within a mile or two of cannon-shot; and I should have gone within

half a mile if my dignity had permitted me, or if my resentment had lasted. I liberated the messager, detaining as hostage his son, who accompanied him, and promising that if the *mincepie* was secured, I would make him a chevalier on the spot. Providence favoured our arms. But unfortunately there were among my staff-officers some who had fought under Turenne, and who, I suspect, retained the infection of heresy. They presented the *mincepie* to me on their knees, and I ate. It was Friday. I did not remember the day, when I began to eat; but the sharpness of the weather, the odour of the pie, and something of vengeance springing up again at the sight of it, made me continue after I had recollected: and for my greater condemnation, I had inquired that very morning of what materials it was composed. God sett his face against me, and hid from me the light of his countenance. I lost victory after victory; nobody knows how; for my generals were better than the enemy's, my soldiers more numerous, more brave, more disciplined. And, extraordinary and awful! even those who swore to conquer or die, ran back again like whelps just gelt, crying, *It is the first duty of a soldier to see his king in safety.* I never heard so many fine

sentiments, or fewer songs. My stomach was out of order by the visitation of the Lord. I took the sacrament on the Sunday.

LA CHAISE.

The sacrament on a Friday's *gras!* I should have recommended a clyster first, with a *de profundis*, a *miserere*, and an *eructavit cor meum*, and lastly a little oil of ricina, which, administered by the holy and taken by the faithful, is almost as efficacious in its way as that of Rheims. Penance is to be done: your Majesty must fast: your Majesty must wear sackcloth next your skin, and carry ashes upon your head before the people.

LOUIS.

Father, I cannot consent to this humiliation: the people must fear me. What are you doing with those scissars and that pill? I am sound in body; give it Villeroy or Richelieu.

LA CHAISE.

Sire, no impiety, no levity, I pray. In this pill, as your Majesty calls it, are some flakes of ashes from the incense, which seldom is pure gum; break it between your fingers, and scatter it upon your peruke: well done: now take this.

LOUIS.

Faith! I have no sore on groin or limb. A black plaister! what is that for?

LA CHAISE.

This is sackcloth. It was the sack in which Madame de Maintenon put her knitting, until the pins frayed it.

LOUIS.

I should have believed that sackcloth means...

LA CHAISE.

No interpretations of scripture, I charge you from authority, Sire. Put it on your back or bosom.

LOUIS.

God forgive me, sinner! It has dropt down into my breeches: will that do?

LA CHAISE.

Did it, in descending, touch your back, belly, ribs, breast, or shoulder, or any part that needs mortification, and can be mortified without scandal?

LOUIS.

I placed it between my frills.

LA CHAISE.

In such manner as to touch the skin sensibly?

LOUIS.

It tickled me, by stirring a hair or two.

LA CHAISE.

Be comforted then: for people have been tickled to death.

LOUIS.

But, father, you remitt the standing in presence of the people?

LA CHAISE.

Indeed I do not. Stand at the window, son of St. Louis!

LOUIS.

And perform the same ceremonies? no, upon my conscience! My almoner....

LA CHAISE.

They are performed.

LOUIS.

But the people will never know what is on my head or in my breeches.

LA CHAISE.

The penance is performed so far: tomorrow is Friday: one more rigid must be enforced. Six dishes alone shall come upon the table; and, altho fasting does not extend to wines or liqueurs, I order that three kinds only of wine be presented, and three of liqueur.

LOUIS.

In the six dishes is soup included?

LA CHAISE.

Soup is not served in a dish; but I forbid more than three kinds of soup.

LOUIS.

Oysters of Cancale...

LA CHAISE.

Those come in barrels: take care they be not dished. Your Majesty must either eat them raw

from the barrel, or dressed in scallop, or both; but beware, I say again, of dishing this article, as your soul shall answer for it at the last day. There are those who would prohibit them wholly. I have experienced . . . I mean in others . . . strange uncouth effects therefrom, which, unless they shadow forth something mystical, it were better not to provoke.

LOUIS.

Pray, father, why is that frightful day which you mentioned just now, and which I think I have heard mentioned on other occasions, called the last? when the last in this life is over before it comes, and when the first in the next is not begun.

LA CHAISE.

It is called the last day by the Church, because after that day the Church can do nothing for the sinner. Her saints, martyrs, and confessors, can plead at the bar for him the whole of that day until sunset, some say until after *angelus;* then the books are closed, the candles put out, the doors shut, and the key turned: the flames of Purgatory then sink into the floor, and would not wither a cistus-leaf, full-blown and shed: there is nothing left but heaven and hell, songs and lamentations.

LOUIS.

Permitt me to ask another question of no less

importance, and connected with my penance. The bishop of Aix in Provence has sent me thirty fine quails...

LA CHAISE.

There are naturalists who assert that quails have fallen from heaven, like manna. Externally they bear the appearance of birds, and I have eaten them in that persuasion. If however any one, from grave authority, is convinced of the contrary, or propends to believe so, and eats therof, the fault is venial. I conferred with Tamburini on this momentous point. He distinguishes between quails taken in the field, or quails taken in the air as they descend or pass, and tame quails, bred within coops and enclosures, which are begotten in the ordinary way of generation, and whose substance in that case must be different. I cannot believe that the bishop of Aix would be the conservator of creatures so given to fighting and wantonness; but rather would opine that his quails descended somewhere in his diocese, and perhaps as a mark of divine favour to so worthy a member of the Church. It is safer to eat them after twelve o'clock at night; but where there is purity and humility of spirit, I see not that they are greatly to be dreaded.

The fiction of the quails, at the conclusion of this dialogue, will appear extravagant to those only who are in ignorance that such opinions have prevailed, not among casuists alone but among philosophers. A case more immediately in point is this. The Carthusians, to whom animal food is forbidden, whereby they mean solely the flesh of quadrupeds and of birds, may nevertheless eat the *gull:* it may be eaten by all catholics, even in Lent. I know not whether from this permission, and the acceptance of it, we derive our English verb and noun : I think it probable.

We often lay most stress on our slightest faults, and have more apprehension from things unessential than from things essential... When Lord Tylney was on his deathbed, and had not been shaved for two days, he burst suddenly into tears, and cried to his valet, *are not you ashamed to abandon me? would you let me go this figure into the presence of my Maker?*

He was shaved, and (I hope) presented.

* * * *

Louis XIV is the great exemplar of kingship, the object of almost religious worship to countless declamers against the ferocity of *the people.* The invasion of Holland, the conflagration of the Palatinate, the revocation of the edict of Nantes, have severally been celebrated, by French poets, French historians, French jurists, and French bishops. The most unprovoked act of cruelty on record was perpetrated by another king of France. I transcribe the words of an historian, the defender and panegyrist of them all, Bussieres. Victi Bulgari, et ex sociis in servitutem rapti, mox eorum plures relictâ patriâ exulatum ultro abierunt. Ex iis ad *novem millia, uxoribus liberisque impliciti,* a Dagoberto sedes petunt... Jussi per hyemem hærere in Bavariâ dum amplius rex deliberaret, in

plures urbes domosque sparsi sunt; tum novo barbaroque facinore unâ nocte cæsi omnes simul. *Quippe Dagobertus immani consilio Boiarios jubet, singulos suis hospitibus necem inferre, ratione nullâ ætatis aut sexûs;* et quâ truculentiâ imperatum, obtemperatum eâdem. Condictâ nocte miseri homines in asylo somni obtruncantur, imbelles feminæ, insontes pueri; totque funera hilaritati fuerunt, non luctui... This forms a peculiar feature in the national character, indestructible amidst all forms of government. It is amusing to read our jesuit's words in the sequel. Ad beneficiorum fontem se convertit, multaque dona elargitus templis, *emendabat scelera liberalitate*... to priests and monks... Nec Dagoberto *liberalitas* pia frustra fuit: siquidem sancti quos in vivis multum coluerat, Dionysius, Mauritius, et Martinus, oblati sunt Joanni monacho *vigilanti*, regis animam eripientes e potestate dæmonum sævisque tormentis, eamque secum in cœli regiam deducentes,

CONVERSATION VIII.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

AND

HORNE TOOKE.

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TOOKE.

Doctor Johnson, I rejoice in the opportunity, late as it presents itself, of congratulating you on the completion of your great undertaking: my bookseller sent me your Dictionary the day it issued from the press, and it has exercised ever since, (and some years have now elapsed) a considerable part of my time and attention.

JOHNSON.

Who are you, sir?

TOOKE.

My name is Horne.

JOHNSON.

What is my Dictionary, sir, to you?

TOOKE.

A treasure, I doubt not.

JOHNSON.

Keep it then at home and to yourself, sir, as

you would any other treasure, and talk no more about it than you would about that.

TOOKE.

Doctor, my studies have led me some little way into etymology, and I am interested in whatever contributes to the right knowledge of our language.

JOHNSON.

Sir, have you redd our old authors?

TOOKE.

I have redd all of them that are printed and extant.

JOHNSON.

Prodigious! do you speak truth?

TOOKE.

To the best of my belief.

JOHNSON.

Sir, how could you, a firebrand tost about by the rabble, a restless spirit, a demogorgon, find leisure for so much reading?

TOOKE.

The number of English books, first printed before the accession of James the first, is smaller than you appear to imagine, and the manuscripts, I believe, are not numerous; certainly in the libraries of our Universities they are rather scanty. I wish you had traced in your preface the changes made in the language these last three centuries, for which about three pages would have been suf-

ficient. The first attempt to purify and reform the English tongue, was made by John Lylly, in a book entitled *Euphues and his England**. This author has often been confounded with William Lilly a grammarian better known. Altho our governors have taken no pains, either to improve our language or to extend it, none in Europe is spoken habitually by so many. The French boast the universality of theirs: yet the Germans, the Spaniards, and the Italians may contend with them on this ground; for as the dutch is a dialect of the german, so is the portuguese of the spanish, and not varying in more original words than the milanese and neapolitan from the tuscan. The languages of the two most populous empires in Europe, are confined to the fewest people. There are not thirteen millions who speak turkish, nor fifteen who speak russian. If any respect had been had to the literary glory of our country, wheron much of its political is and ever will be dependent, many millions more would at this time be speaking in the English tongue.

We should be anxious both to improve our lan-

* Among the works of Charles de St. Pierre is *Projet pour reformer l'Orthographie des Langues de l'Europe.* He must not be confounded with Bernardin de St. Pierre, fanciful as is the treatise.

guage and to extend it. England ought to have no colony in which it is not very soon the only one spoken. Nations may be united by identity of speech, more easily than by identity of laws: for identity of laws only shews the conquered that they are bound *to* another people, while identity of speech shews them that they are bound *with* it. There is no firm conjunction but this; none that does not retain on it the scar and seam.

JOHNSON.

So far, I believe, I may agree with you, and remain a good subject.

TOOKE.

Let us now descend from generalities to particulars. Our spelling hath undergone as many changes as the french, and worse.

JOHNSON.

And because it hath undergone many, you would make it undergo more! And because our English books at one time were scanty, you would oppose the scanty to the many, with all the inconsistency of a true republican. You reformers will let nothing be great, nothing stable.

TOOKE.

Doctor, I know not the intentions and designs of others; I know not whether I myself am so virtuous that I should be called a republican, or so

intelligent that I should be called a reformer. In regard to stability I do however think I could demonstrate to you, that what has a broad basis is more stable than what has a narrow one, and that nothing is gained to solidity by top-heaviness. In regard to greatness, I doubt my ability to convince you. Much in this is comparative. Compared with the plain the mountains are indeed high: compared with what is above them in the universe of space, they are atoms and invisibilities. Such too are mortals: I do not say the creatures of the cannon-foundery and the cutlery; I do not say those of the jeweler and toyman; from whom we exclude light as from infants in a fever, and to whom we speak as to drunken men to make them quiet; but the most intellectual we ever have conversed with: what are they in comparison with a Shakespear or a Newton? You however seemed to referr to power only. I have not meditated on this subject so much as you have, and my impression from it is weaker: nevertheless I do presume to be as hearty and as firm a supporter of it, removing (as I would do) the incumbrances from about it, and giving it ventilation.

JOHNSON.

Ventilation! yes, forsooth! from the bellows of Brontes and Steropes and Pyracmon.

TOOKE.

Come, doctor, let us throw a little more dust on our furnace, which blazes fiercelier than our work requires. The word *firy* comes appositely: why do we write it *fiery*, when *wire* gives *wiry?* Why do we write *lieutenant*, when we write, "I would as *lief*." Let us always be analogical when we can be so without offence to pronunciation. There are some few words in which we are absurdly retentive of the Norman laws. We write *island* with an s, as if we feared to be thought ignorant of its derivation. If we must be reverential to custom, let it rather be in the presence of the *puisne* judge. There are only the words *isle*, *island*, *puisne*, *viscount*, and the family name *Grosvenor*, in which an *s* is unsounded. I would omitt it in *these**.

* I rejoice in this opportunity of paying my respects to Mr. Mitford, living or dead. The only judicious thing I find in his history is the spelling of *iland*. His ignorance and falsehood are beyond all match and measure: several instances of each are to be found within a few pages, in his invective against Demosthenes. If he be living, I intreat our ministers to grant a pension, or to devise an appointment, in recompense of his hatred against the ancient liberties of his country; and, if this should be inconvenient, to recommend him to the Pacha of Egypt as the most proper officer to remove from their native soil the wives, daughters, and infant sons, of the Greeks; praying that he may be confirmed in his official situ-

JOHNSON.

This is dry.

TOOKE.

So are nuts; but we crack and eat them: they are good for the full, and for those only.

JOHNSON.

The old writers had strange and arbitrary ways of spelling, which makes them appear more barbarous than they really are.

TOOKE.

You have now brought me to a question, which, if you will favour me a few moments, we will discuss. I perceive that you preferr the spelling of our gentlemen and ladies now flourishing, to that of Middleton and Milton.

JOHNSON.

Middleton is not so correct a writer as you fancy. He was an infidel, sir, and, what is worse, a scoffer. He wants the sweetness of Pope and Addison, the raciness of Dryden and Cowley, the

ation, until a sufficient number of Nubians and Arabs be put into quiet and legitimate possession of the Peloponnesus, and until envoys have arrived from the Christian kings and princes to reside *near* such regular government, as the wisdom of their brother and cousin shall have established, under God, for the happiness of his people.

compression of Swift and Hobbes, the propriety and justness and elevation of Barrow, the winning warmth and affectionate soul of Jeremy Taylor, the terseness of Junius, the vivacity of Burke.. clinging to a new idea, like a woodbine to a young tree, till he embraces every part of it and overtops it.

TOOKE.

You will acknowledge that we have nothing so classical in our language as the *Life of Cicero*, nothing at once so harmonious and so unaffected.

JOHNSON.

Do you assert that Izaac Walton, who also wrote biography, is not equally unaffected?

TOOKE.

Unaffected he is, and equally so, but surely less harmonious. Allow me to join with you in admiration of this most natural writer and most virtuous man, whose volumes I read with greater pleasure than any excepting Shakespear's.

JOHNSON.

This would appear an absurdity, to those who are ignorant that the wisest books do not always please most the wisest men; and that, if there are some which we want in our strength, there are others which we want in our infirmities. For-

tunate is he who, in no hour of relaxation or of idleness, takes up, to amuse or pamper it, a worse book than Walton.

TOOKE.

There is indeed, as you appear to indicate, no similitude between Walton and Shakespear; no more, I confess it, than there is between a cowslip and the sun that shines upon it: but there is a perpetually pleasant light, if I may use the expression, reflected from every thought and sentence, and no man ever redd him without being for a time both happier and better. I, like yourself, have detected inaccuracies in Middleton; not in his reasonings and conclusions, for in these he is clear and strong, but in expressions of small importance. He says in his *Letter from Rome*, "The temple of some heathen deity *or* that of the Paphian Venus," p. 134. as if the Paphian Venus was not a heathen deity. "Popery, *which* abounds with instances of the grossest forgeries both of saints and reliques, *which* have been *imposed for genuine*, &c." p. 171. To have been *forgeries*, they must have been *imposed for genuine*: here is also a confusion in the repetition of *which*, relating to two subjects; as again "The prejudices *which* the authority of so celebrated a

writer may probably *inject* to the disadvantage of my argument, *which*, &c." p. 224.

JOHNSON.

If Warburton had been elegant in language as he was acute in argument, he would have exposed to ridicule such an expression as *inject a prejudice*.

TOOKE.

His acuteness seems usually to have forsaken him the moment he lost his malignity. Nothing is weaker than his argument on this question, nothing more inelegant than his phraseology. Our pugnacious bishop, altho he defended the divine legation of Moses, would have driven the chariot of Pharaoh against him into the Red-sea. You remember the verses, I know not by whom :

> If Warburton by chance should meet
> The twelve apostols in the street,
> He'd pick a quarrel with 'em all,
> And shove his Saviour from the wall.

He says, in allusion to Middleton, " How many able writers have employed *their* time and learning to prove christian Rome to have borrowed *their* superstitions from the pagan city?" He means her superstitions, and not the superstitions of the *able writers*, which the words, as they stand, de-

signate. He surely could not dissent from Middleton, with whom nearly all the papists agree, drawing however far different inferences.

JOHNSON.

On this ground I go with Middleton: he states an historical fact: he states a thing visible: but while he pretends to approach Religion for the sake of looking at her dress, he stabs her. Come, sir! come, sir! philology rather than this!

TOOKE.

A little more then of philology: but first let me suggest to you that no stab, my good doctor, can inflict a dangerous wound on Truth. Homer had probably the design of impressing some such sentiment, when he said that celestial bodies soon unite again. If you have ever had the curiosity to attend a course of lectures on chemistry, or have resided in the house of any friend who cultivates it, you may perhaps have observed how a single drop of colourless liquid, poured on another equally colourless, raises a sudden cloud and precipitates it to the bottom. So unsuspected falsehood, taken up as pure and limpid, is thrown into a turbid state by a drop; and it does not follow that the drop must be of poison.

I wish it were possible, on all occasions, to render the services we owe to criticism, without the ap-

pearance of detracting from established or from rising reputations. Since however the judicious critic will animadvert on none, whose glory can be materially injured by his strictures; on none whose excellence is not so great and so well-founded, that his faults in the comparison are light and few; the labour is to be endured with patience. For it is only by this process that we can go on from what is good to what is perfect. I am in the habit of noting down the peculiarities of every book I read; and, knowing that I was to meet you here, I have placed in the fold of my glove such as I once collected out of Middleton.

JOHNSON.

I shall be gratified, sir, by hearing them; and much more so, let me assure you, than by dissertations, however rich and luminous, on his character and genius, which prove nothing else to me than the abilities of the declamer.

TOOKE.

I will begin them with his orthography. He writes constantly *intire, onely, florish, embassador, inquire, genuin, tribun, troublesom, chast, hast* for *haste, wast* for *waste.*

JOHNSON.

Pronouncing these six last as the common people do universally, and as others besides the common

people in his native county, Yorkshire. I approve of the rest; I disapprove of these.

TOOKE.

He always writes *battel, sepulcher, luster.*

JOHNSON.

I do not blame him.

TOOKE.

He writes the verb *rebell* with a single l.

JOHNSON.

The fault must surely be the compositor's; and yet several final consonants have lately been omitted in our verbs, by the sanction or the indifference of the writer.

TOOKE.

He writes *grandor* for *grandeur*, and confuses *born* and *borne*, which indeed are of the same origin, but differently spelt in their different significations. As these two participles are the same, altho spelt differently, so are the two substantives *flower* and *flour;* which we may see the more plainly by removing them a little out of our own language, and placing them at the side of a cognate word in another. An academy of Tuscany, still in existence I think, entitled *Della Crusca*, chose for its emblem a sieve, and for its motto, *Il più bel fior ne coglie.*

JOHNSON.

True enough! and now indeed I perceive the reason, indifferently versed as I am in the italian language, why the members of that academy have been universally called, of late years, *coglioni*.

TOOKE.

Whenever I hear a gentleman addressed by that title, I shall bow to him as to a personage of high distinction, if I should travel at any time so far as Florence.

JOHNSON.

Rightly judged, sir! a *coglione* in all countries is treated (I doubt not) with deference and respect.

TOOKE.

Middleton writes *clame, proclame, exclame;* I think properly; as *pretense* and *defense*. He never uses the word *boast,* but *brag* instead of it; and the word *ugly*, in itself not elegant, most inelegantly. "*There are many ugly reports about him,*" "*which Cicero calls an ugly blow,*" "*an ugly precedent,*" "*an ugly disturbance broke out.*" He uses *proper* too as only the vulgar do. "*Cicero never speaks of him with respect, nor of his government but as of a proper tyranny.*" "*A proper apotheosis.*"

JOHNSON.

I did not imagine him to be so little choice in his expressions. You have collected a number that quite astonishes me.

TOOKE.

May I read on?

JOHNSON.

Are there more still upon that small piece of paper? Pray satisfy my curiosity.

TOOKE.

Will you admitt a *southsayer*?

JOHNSON.

No, truly.

TOOKE.

"*The Senate had no stomach to meddle with an affair so delicate.*"

JOHNSON.

The delicacy of a thing in general is no reason why the stomach is disinclined to meddle with it.

TOOKE.

"*An oath which Cato himself, tho he had publickly declared, that he would never do it, was forced at last to swallow.*" "*He had digested many things against his will.*"

JOHNSON.

Then they could not have been hard of digestion. The evil is, when we have the will and cannot do

it. But I hope we may now leave the dining room.

TOOKE.

"*I did not take him to be a rascal.*" "*Such clauses were only bugbears.*" "*The occasion was so pat.*" "*Shall I do it, says I, in my own way;*" and two lines lower, "*I will move the senate then, says I;*" and three after, "*So I thought, says I.*" Cicero is the speaker! "*Cross the Tyber*" for *across.* "I *had* rather *have* him the comrade of Romulus than of the goddess Safety." "To try what fortunes he could *carve* for himself." "He seems to be hard *put to it,* for a pretext." "Part *with without* regret." "*Dressing up* an impeachment." "If any other fate *expects me.*" "They would submit their conduct to the judgement of Cato, and deposit four thousand pounds *apiece* in his hands."

JOHNSON.

Apiece cannot in such cases be used instead of *each.* Its proper sense is of things saleable, inert or alive, but rather of the inert.

TOOKE.

I find in most writers the word *each* used indiscriminately for *every:* this is wrong in prose: *each* ought never to be employed but in reference to persons or things mentioned before.

JOHNSON.

I never heard that.

TOOKE.

It may be wrong; consider it. Middleton translates the word *innocens*, which, when spoken of military men, signifies their forbearance and moderation, into *innocent*, a term quite ridiculous when thus applied in English. In Cato's letter to Cicero, about his intended triumph, we find it thrice. "Young *Cesar flowed* from the source of my counsels." "What *flows* from the result."

JOHNSON.

False metaphor!

TOOKE.

"If ever they *got the better*." "To *give* the *exclusion*." "Coming *forward wards*."

JOHNSON.

Redundant and very inelegant!

TOOKE.

"The high office *which* you fill, and the eminent distinction *that* you bear."

JOHNSON.

Much better without both *which* and *that*.

TOOKE.

He uses the superlative *freest*.

JOHNSON.

Properly, the word *free* has no comparative nor

superlative: for all monosyllables are made dissyllables by them, which could not be in *freer* and *freest.* Many of his political and religious, and some of his moral and historical reflexions do not please me. A scholar, as he was, should never have countenanced the sentence of Valerius Maximus on Marius. "Arpinum," he says, "had the singular felicity to produce the most *glorious contemner*, as well as the most illustrious improver of the arts and eloquence." A singular kind of felicity indeed! If this glory had had its followers, the greater part of the world would at this time have been a forest. He places strange and discordant ideas in close apposition. Speaking of Sylla, he says, "He employed himself particularly in *reforming the disorders* of the state, by putting his new *laws* in execution, and in *distributing the confiscated lands of the adverse party* among his legions: so that the republic seemed to be once more seated on a *legal basis*, and the laws and judicial procedings began to florish in the forum." (V. I. p. 35.)

TOOKE.

There is also an idle and silly thought in the Preface. Romulus, he tells you, seems to have *borrowed* the plan of his new state from the old government of Athens, as it was instituted by

Theseus. What could Romulus know of Theseus or of Athens? The people were in the same state of civilization, had the same wants, and satisfied them alike. Romulus borrowed the houses, harvests, and wives, of those near him: he borrowed no more from Athens than from Change-Alley. The laws of Lycurgus were known to Numa first among the Romans.

JOHNSON.

Leave politics alone: let history lie quiet. What I remarked, some time since, on comparatives and superlatives, makes me desirous that we had a collection of latin and english comparatives, the former terminating in the masculine and feminine by *ior*, the latter in *er*. It would shew us at a glance to what words the Roman writers, and our own, thought it better to prefix *magis* and *more*, instead of the comparative by the termination; and we should clearly see, what never occurred to me until now, that the more ancient and the more elegant chose the simpler mode preferably. Middleton, whom you have been quoting and examining so attentively, writes *honester*, *modester*: Milton *virtuousest*.

TOOKE.

With all my veneration for this extraordinary and exemplary man, I would never use that

word; and with all the preference I give, whenever it can be given, to the comparative formed by the final syllable, I never would admitt it, nor the superlative, in words ending with *ous*: such as *virtuous, pious, religious.*

JOHNSON.

Nor I truly: but perhaps our contemporaries are somewhat too abstemious, in words to which it might be more gracefully adapted.

TOOKE.

Middleton is once or twice vulgar: he writes "*for good and all,*" p. 286. This is somewhat in the manner of your friend Edmund Burke, who uses the word *anotherguess;* in which expression are both vulgarity and ignorance: the real term is *another-guise;* there is nothing of *guessing.*

JOHNSON.

Edmund Burke, sir, is so violent a reformer that I am confident he will die a tory. I am surprised that any thing he does or says should encounter your disapprobation. He, sir, and Junius should have been your favorites, if indeed they are not one and the same: for Edmund writes better when he writes for another, and any character suits him rather than his own. Shenstone, when he forgot his Strephons and Corydons, and followed Spenser, became a poet. Your old an-

tagonist Junius (what makes you smile, sir?) wears an elegant sword-knot, and swaggers bravely. What think you?

TOOKE.

Of Junius I would rather say little, for more reasons than one. His words are always elegant, his sentences always sonorous, his attacks always vigorous, and rarely (altho I may be a sufferer by asserting it) misplaced. Still however those only can be called great writers, who bring to bear on their subject more than a few high faculties of the mind. I require in him whom I am to acknowledge so, accuracy of perception, variety of mood, of manner, and of cadence, imagination, reflexion, force, sweetness, copiousness, depth, perspicuity. I require in him a princely negligence of little things, and the proof that altho he hath seized much, he hath also left much unappropriated. Let me see nothing too trim, nothing quite incondite. Equal solicitude is not to be exerted upon all ideas alike; some are brought into the fulness of light, some are adumbrated: so on the beautiful plant of our conservatories, a part is in fruit, a part in blossom; not a branch is leafless, not a spray is naked. Then come those graces and allurements, for which we have few and homely names, but which among the ancients had many, and expres-

sive of delight and of divinity, *illecebræ*, *veneres*: these, like the figures that hold the lamps on staircases, both invite us and shew us the way up: for, write as wisely as we may, we cannot fix the minds of men upon our writings, unless we take them gently by the ear.

JOHNSON.

Here we meet and agree; but you exact too much: you include too many great properties within your stipulations.

TOOKE.

In Junius several of these were uncalled-for; some that would have been welcome were away; and in my opinion he is hardly a great writer, in whom any thing that is great is wanting.

JOHNSON.

Sometimes even Cicero himself is defective both in ratiocination and in euphony.

TOOKE.

It cannot be controverted that, even in this most eloquent author, there are sentences which might be better, and no little.

JOHNSON.

For instance in this monkish canticle,

> Bellum autem ita *suscipiatur*,
> Ut nihil aliud nisi pax quæsita *videatur*.

TOOKE.

By writing *susceptum sit*, he would have avoided the censure he has here incurred too justly.

JOHNSON.

Can any thing be more self-evident, and therefor more unnecessary to state, and insist on, than this; namely, *that those are worthy of friendship, in whom there is a reason why they should be our friends!* Digni autem sunt amicitiâ, quibus in ipsis inest causa cur diligantur. De Amicitiâ. Or indeed much more so, than *that old age comes on by degrees;* which he expresses in words redundant with the letter s. Sensim sine sensu ætas senescit. De Senectute. And I wish I could think it were free from the ambition of a bad antithesis, in the *sensim sine sensu.*

He is the only latin prose writer in whom you will find a pentameter. Quid dominus navîs? eripietne suum? De Offic. l. iii. And I doubt whether in any other you can shew me the tenses of *possum* repeated seven times in about fourteen lines *, with several of the same both before and after.

TOOKE.

Doctor, let us try to think as rightly as Cicero,

* De Officiis, l. ii, beginning at the close of the paragraph, "Adde ductus aquarum, &c."

and to express our thoughts as clearly; we may then as easily pardon those who discover a few slight faults in our writings, as he would pardon us, were he living, for pointing them out in his. The two most perfect writers (I speak of style) are Demosthenes and Pascal; but all their writings put together are not worth a third part of what remains to us of Cicero; nor can it be expected that the world will produce another (for the causes of true eloquence are extinct) who shall write at the same time so correctly, so clearly, so delightfully, so wisely.

JOHNSON.

Let him give way, sir, let him give way, for your *rump-parliament* and regicide. The causes of true eloquence are extinct! I understand you, sir: rump and regicide for ever!

TOOKE.

Doctor, I am not one of those who would agitate so idle a question, as, whether it is the part of a contemptible man, much less whether it is that of a criminal one, to scoff at superstitions forbidden by the religion of our country, or to punish with death and ignominy, a torturer, a murderer, a tyrant, a violator of all his oaths, and a subverter of all his laws!

JOHNSON.

That sentence, sir, is too graceful for mouths

like yours. *Burn, sink, and destroy* are words of better report from the hustings.

TOOKE.

I presume you mean, doctor, when they are directed by pious men, against men of the same language and lineage: for words, like cyphers, have their value from their place. I am sorry that you seem offended.

JOHNSON.

It is the nature of the impudent never to be angry.

TOOKE.

Impudence, I find, is now for the first time installed among the christian virtues.

JOHNSON.

No, sir: impudence is to virtue what cynicism is to stoicism: nothing is harder or crueler; nothing seems less so.

TOOKE.

Doctor, let me present to you this cup of tea.

JOHNSON.

Why! the man wears upon his mind an odd party-coloured jacket; half courtier, half rebel. I do not think I have flattered him very much; yet he bowed as if he was suing me to dance with him.

TOOKE.

Once I was of opinion that nothing in Pascal could be corrected or improved: this opinion I have seen reason to change, still considering him much more exact and elaborate than the best english writers. In the second sentence of the *Provincial Letters*, he says, "Tant d'assemblées d'une compagnie aussi célèbre qu'est la Faculté de Théologie à Paris, et où il s'est passé tant de choses *si extraordinaires* et *si* hors d'exemple, en font conçevoir une *si* haute idée qu'on ne peut croire qu'il n'y en ait un sujet bien *extraordinaire*. Cependant vous serez bien surpris, quand vous apprendrez par ce recit à quoi se termine un *si* grand éclat."

JOHNSON.

These repetitions indeed appear inelegant.

TOOKE.

In the first sentence, a few lines above, he used bien *abusé*, and afterwards bien *important*. I shall make no observation on the disagreeable recurrence of sound in *surpris* and *recit*. Similar sounds have sometimes a good effect; but it must be an exquisite ear that distinguishes the proper time. Permitt me to continue the period.

"Et c'est ce que je vous dirai en peu de mots, après m'en être parfaitement instruit."

JOHNSON.

Here I can detect no fault.

TOOKE.

It lies in the reasoning. Pascal says plainly,

"You will be very much surprised, when you learn by my recital how such a bustle terminates; and I will tell you it in few words, when I am perfectly informed of it."

JOHNSON.

I have not yet detected the error.

TOOKE.

How can Pascal say positively, that his correspondent will be *very much surprised*, at the result of a thing which he is about to relate, when he himself does not well know what that result will be? That he does not, is evident; because he says he will tell him *after* he has discovered the matter of fact. He makes another promise too, rather hazardous: he promises that he will tell it in few words. Now, not seeing the extent of the information he may receive on it, few words perhaps might not suffice.

JOHNSON.

I doubt whether the last objection be not hypercriticism.

TOOKE.

Better that than *hypocriticism*; the vague and

undisciplined progeny of our Mercuries, which run furiously from the porter-pot to the teapot, and then breathe their last. There can be no hypercriticism upon such excellent writers as Pascal. Few suspect any fault in him; hardly one critic in a century or two can find any. Impudence may perch and crow upon high places, and may scratch up and scatter its loose and vague opinions: this suits idlers: but *we* neither talk to the populace, nor stand in the sun pointing out what they heed not, and what they could never see.

If the volumes of Pascal were before me, I might lay my finger on other small defects, some in expression, some in reasoning: and I should do it; for you would not suffer him to fall thereby in your esteem, nor even to mingle in the crowd of high literary names. He stands with few; and few will ever join him.

JOHNSON.

Good scholars and elegant writers may sometimes lapse. Gray is both: yet he says, *their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse, &c.* There were nine, mythologists tell us; but they have forgotten to inform us which was the unlettered one. We might as well talk of the powerless Jupiter, the lame Mercury, and the squinting Venus. In another poem *the court was sat*, is not

english; nor is the note, in the ode to music, on Mary de Valence, "of whom tradition says that her husband:" tradition does not speak here of *her*, but of the husband.

TOOKE.

Gray was a very learned man, and no mean poet. I wish he had not written

> Ah happy hills! ah pleasing shades!
> Ah fields beloved in vain!

JOHNSON.

Why so? the verses are tender.

TOOKE.

In the next breath he tells us plainly that they were *not* beloved in vain; quite the contrary; that they soothed his weary soul, and breathed a second spring. What could he have more from them?

JOHNSON.

Rent, sir, rent. I have graver things to adduce against him. He has dared to talk about the *star of Brunswick*.

TOOKE.

Doctor, I entreat you, as a lover of loyalty, to let every man be loyal in his own way. Obedience to the existing laws is a virtue: respect and reverence of misfortune is another. Only cast out from the pale of loyalty those who espouse the interests of a part rather than of the whole. Whenever I

see a person, all whose connexions are plebeian, strive and strain for aristocracy, I know what the fellow would have: he would sacrifice the interests of his friends and class for his own profit. Generosity may induce the high-born man to drop behind his family, and to concern himself in meliorating the condition of those below him. Officiousness and baseness are the grounds on which the plebeian moves, who wrangles and fights for those who are more powerful than enough without him. This is the counterfeit loyalty, on which I would gladly see descend your reprobating stamp and hammer.

JOHNSON.

To return to philology: even Cicero himself, as we have seen, speaks incorrectly.

TOOKE.

Sometimes. Yet my veneration for his genius and his eloquence is undiminished by his inattention and negligence, rarely as they occurr and on unimportant matters. I never can think that the word *infinitior* is founded on reason. What is infinite cannot be *more* infinite. I do not object so strongly to *perfectissimus*: this is only a mode of *praising* what is perfect, which, like infinity, cannot be extended or increased. There are words however, which neither in their sense nor their

formation seem capable of a comparative or superlative. We cannot say *more* or *most* peer*less*; *more* or *most* penni*less*. We often find indeed a *most* care*less* servant, a *most* thought*less* boy: but the expression is at least inelegant and unhappy: I should even say vicious, if celebrated writers did not check and controll me by their authority.

JOHNSON.

Sir, this is quibbling.

TOOKE.

If correctness be the best part of eloquence, and as ninety-nine to a hundred in it, which I think it is, then this is no quibble. When our servants or tradesmen speak to us, it is quite enough that we understand them; but in a great writer we require exactness and propriety. Unless we have them from him, we are dissatisfied in the same manner as if the man who refuses to pay us a debt should offer us a present. I am ready for eloquence when I find correctness. You complain, and very justly, of that affected and pedantic expression of Milton, where he says that Adam was the most comely of men ever born since, and Eve the fairest of her daughters.

JOHNSON.

Ay, certainly.

TOOKE.

Yet you understand what he means. On reading the verses the other day, I recollected a parallel passage in Tacitus on Vespasian: Solus omnium *ante se* principum in melius mutatus; and fancying that I had seen it quoted by La Rochefoucauld, I had the curiosity to enquire in what manner he translated it: for he leaves none without a french version. His words are, "Il fut le seul des empereurs, ses predecesseurs, qui changea en mieux." Here we see how the two most acute men that ever existed, (for such they certainly were in the anatomy of the human heart), passed over, without observing it, the most preposterous perversion of language and plain sense.

JOHNSON.

These are faults committed by pedants for the mere purpose of defending them.

TOOKE.

People far removed from pedantry use expressions which excite our wonder more strongly still. They say commonly a *dead heat*, when two or more horses reach the goal at once: a *dead hand* at such or such a thing, speaking of a man apparently the most alive and active.

JOHNSON.

Psha! vulgarisms! vulgarisms!

TOOKE.

A proof of their extensive use. No expression can become a vulgarism, which has not a broad foundation. The language of the vulgar hath its source in physics; in known, comprehended, and operative things: the language of those who stand above the vulgar, is less pure, as flowing from what they do not in general comprehend: hence the profusion of broken and ill assorted metaphors which we find in the conversation of almost all, who stand in the intermediate space between the lettered and the lowest. I will go further, and venture to assert that you will find most of the expressions in daily use among ourselves to be ambiguous and vague. Your servant would say, *a man told me so.* The most learned and elegant of your acquaintance would probably say, on the same occasion, *a certain person informed me.* Here the person is not *a certain* but an *uncertain* one, and the thing told may have nothing in it of *information.* A farmer would say *a deal of money for a galloway.* A minister of state, *a considerable sum*, speaking of the same. Reflexion shews us clearly that, altho the sum may have been the double of the value, it could not be an object of *consideration*, which word, however abused, is equivalent to *contemplation. Certain*

then is *uncertain*, and *considerable* is *inconsiderable*. These words, you cannot fail to have observed, are the signs and figures, whereby we denote the very two things which, in one form or other, are the most influential and operative on the human mind; magnitude and truth.

JOHNSON.

We will return, at some other time, to the metaphysical of language. Pray tell me now, since you have always a word in defence of the vulgar, what the fools can mean by their *dead heat* and their *dead hand*.

TOOKE.

Add also *dead level*. *Dead* is *finished, accomplished;* in that sense the same as *deed*. *Deed* is *fact*, and *fact* implies *certainty*. A *dead level* is a certain and exact one.

JOHNSON.

Deed however is no adjective.

TOOKE.

Nor is *net*, nor is *life:* yet we say a *net*-income and a *life*-interest. I have sometimes thought that *net* might be *neat;* we know the two words are the same as adjectives. I am however more inclined to believe that it means *purse* in this instance, a thing of the same texture; and my reason is, that we say ordinarily, "he *netted* so much." In our

language there are other parts of speech used somewhat promiscuously. Some verbs with us are french nouns and particles united. What think you of *engross?* .. *en gros.* It means in one sense, as probably you have remarked in your Dictionary, what is written in *thick* characters by lawyers; in another, that appropriation to themselves of what is not theirs by right; attributing to the means (the engrossing, or writing in *thick* letters) what is done by the employer of those means, the lawyer. Colloquially, and sometimes in graver business, we say *on all sides.*

JOHNSON.

Why not?

TOOKE.

How many sides have we? I should have believed that we had two only, if a certain compound did not twitch me by the skirt and lay claim to a third.

JOHNSON.

Sir, a man has but two sides, from which that expression could have been deduced; for *outside* and *inside* have nothing to do with it. They however shew us that *side* in their case signifies *part;* and it has this signification when we say *on all sides. Side,* in this sense, is the same as the latin *situs,* the Italian *sito.* Usum loquendi populo concessi.

TOOKE.

Scientiam mihi reservavi. (Cicero.) We have only two *halves;* yet we say on my *behalf,* on your *behalf,* and on his *behalf,* when the same matter is in litigation among three persons. Chaucer says, *a' this halfe God;* on this side of God: and *four halves,* four *sides,* as his interpreter expresses it.

We, who are not vulgar, say *brother-in-law, son-in-law,* &c. wherin we appear to vie in folly with the French and Italians, and even to excede them. An Italian calls *cognato* what we call *brother-in-law,* neither of which is true. He is not cognate to us, nor is he a brother by the laws. The *beau-frere* of the Frenchman is ludicrous: but not so much as our *grand*son, one day old. A Frenchman must speak more ridiculously still if he would speak of a horse-shoe made of any thing but iron; as Voltaire in Zadig: "Des fers *d'argent* à onze deniers de fin." From the same poverty and perversion of language he attributes *sense* to dust or clouds: "Nuages agitées en *sens* contraires," meaning *direction.* We say *coadjutor* where there is only one helper. *Originate,* a deponent verb, is now become active. People of fashion say, *He originated the measure:* scholars will always say *The measure originated from him.* There is another word which we use improperly: we say, "Such a per-

son was executed for robbery:" now the *person* is *prosecuted*, the *sentence executed*. One would imagine that *executioner* should designate the *judge*, him who executes the laws; not him who executes only one decision of them: but in our jurisprudence we have the hangman so perpetually before us, that the expression is accountable and reasonable. *Execution* then stands with us for *juridical death*, and not for the completion of any other sentence. We employ it again on the seizure of goods, under a warrant.

JOHNSON.

Within the last year or two, I have heard the expression "a man of *talent*," instead of "a man of *talents*:" and I am informed by my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds, who quickly discerns an inelegance and strongly disapproves an innovation, that an *artist* now signifies a *painter*, and *art painting*, exclusively*.

* Since the time of Johnson, the establishment of an academy for painting in England has much infected our language. If we find five metaphors in a chapter, four of them are upon trust from the oil-and-colour-man. When people attend to the meaning of a sentence as much as to the sound of it, what absurdity must they discover in the following!

"The sun shone in full splendour, and, while it softened

TOOKE.

Ignorant people, I myself have remarked, are beginning to speak so: the fashion cannot continue. We might as well call a doctor of physic a doctor of rhubarb, and a doctor of laws a doctor of subpœnas. And yet we smile at the expressions of the vulgar. You would think me vulgar, if I called a man a *desperate* fool, or a house a *desperate* big house.

JOHNSON.

Ay, indeed I should. The desperate big house and the desperate fool be upon thy head!

TOOKE.

One at a time, Doctor. We have many words implying intensity now gone or going out of use

the rugged aspect of the surrounding mountains, threw a glow of transparency over the majestic ruins."

Coxe's Monmouthshire.

The slang of the painter comes crudely from the mouth of the tourist. How ridiculous is the application here! *Glow* and *transparency* are pretty words; but a glow of transparency! what is that? or how is it to be thrown *over* majestic ruins? Are the majestic ruins made transparent? And yet this is the writer who is to discriminate the scenery of one country from the scenery of another; whose precision of language is to instruct us on the state of manners, of learning, of civilization, and of policy.

among the middling classes, and lapsed entirely from the highest. Such as *mighty* (for *very*) which exactly corresponds with the latin *valde;* and *desperate*, in the same sense, for which they had a relative in *insanus*, used by Cicero, before the senate, in designating the terraces of Clodius, which he calls *insanas* substructiones. The vulgar now use *mortally* as Cicero uses *immortally*, an expression of intensity and vehemence. "Te a Cæsare quotidie plus diligi *immortaliter* gaudio." (Ad Frat.)

JOHNSON.

There is hardly any writer who does not sacrifice elegance to force, when he has occasion. Addison says that Virgil "*strained hard* to outdo Lucretius in the description of the plague."

TOOKE.

Addison, in the very same sentence, which I remember for its singular weakness, says also that "if the reader would see with what success, he may find it at large in Scaliger."

JOHNSON.

He might so.

TOOKE.

Could he not find it equally at large in Lucretius and Virgil; or is Scaliger nearer at hand, presenting a more authentic document than the ori-

ginal? Addison is not only an inconsiderate and superficial critic, but is often vulgar and mean, where he has no excuse for it in the exertion of force: he is sometimes ungrammatical. He is both in that verse by which he has expressed how much more useful the senate was in Thessaly than it ever had been at Rome.

JOHNSON.

I remember none such.

TOOKE.

The *corps* of half her senate
Manure the fields of Thessaly.

The grammatical fault would not have been committed, if the word *corps* had been written, as it should be, with a final *e*.

In his *Poem to the King* he hath several times used the word *corps* in the plural. On the contrary he has added *s* to the word *seraphim*. The bathos was never so well illustrated by Swift, as it might have been if he had taken his examples of it from Addison alone. What think you of this?

Thus Ætna, when in fierce eruption *broke*,
Fills heaven with ashes.. and the earth with smoke.

Look now at his Saint Cecilia. The imbecility of the first line we will pass over. In the second, where is the difference between the voice and the accents?

Cecilia's name does all our numbers grace,
From every voice the tuneful accents fly.

What does the word *it* relate to, in the next? certainly not to *the accents*, probably not to *voice*, for the *every* stands in the way.

In soaring trebles now *it* rises high,
And now it sinks and dwells upon the base.

Doctor, I am a dealer in words, a *word-fancier;* excuse me then if I premise to you, in the spirit of trades and callings, the importance I attach to mine.

JOHNSON.

Let us hear what you have to say. Wisdom is founded on words; on the right application of them.

TOOKE.

We have two which we use indifferently; *on* and *upon*. It appears to me that those who study elegance, by which I always mean precision and correctness, may shew it here. I would say *upon a tower:* on the same principle I would say *on a marsh*. There would indeed be no harm in saying *on a tower;* but there would be an impropriety in saying *upon a marsh:* for *up*, whether we are attentive or inattentive, whether we have been a thousand times wrong or never, means *somewhat*

high, somewhat to which we ascend. I should speak correctly if I said "Doctor Johnson *flew upon* me," incorrectly, if I said "he *fell upon* me." Custom is a rule for every thing but contradiction. We have hardly three writers of authority..

JOHNSON.

How! sir! only three! People of your cast in politics are fond of vilifying our country. Is this your whigship?

TOOKE.

Whigship it is indeed: but not mine. Consider me as holding out a cake of meal and honey to appease you, when I bring to your recollection that the Romans have but one. For however great is the genius of Sallustius and Livius and Tacitus, faults have been detected in their style by those who could judge better of it than we can. Almost every elegant verse, almost every harmonious sentence in poetry and eloquence among the Romans, was composed within one half-century. The comic writers were imitators of the Greeks: nothing national is to be found in Plautus himself. Every sentence bears the impression of its attic mint. The great work of Lucretius and the greater of Ovid were the first and last deserving the name of poems. Judging by the language, one would imagine that several centuries had intervened between

them; yet the same reader might remember the day when each was edited. The most beautiful flowers grow in clusters. Lucretius, Catullus, and Calvus, the loss of whose works is incomparably the greatest that latinity has sustained: then Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and Cassius of Parma, the next great loss.. for desirous as every man must be to recover the rest of Cicero and Livius, yet he perceives that there is enough of them before him to judge of their genius quite correctly: the remainder would afford him only the same pleasure as what he possesses and enjoys. In these poets the sources of it are cut off altogether: they can afford us no delight, and we can render them no justice.

JOHNSON.

Addison has exhausted your stock.

TOOKE.

I had forgotten him again. Since however you bring him back to me, I will endeavour to prove that he has exhausted neither my justice nor my patience. He is fond of the word *hint*, which, as a substantive, no poet has used, or ever will use.

Music can noble hints impart.

What is merely a hint, can hardly be noble.

The Almighty listens to a tuneful tongue,
And seems well pleased and courted with a song.

If these lines had been translated from Voltaire,

you would have cried out against his impiety.. I know not your opinion of Chaucer.

JOHNSON.

I do not read what I should read with difficulty.

TOOKE.

Addison says of him,

In vain he jests in his unpolished strain,
And tries to make his readers laugh in vain.

The verses are a tautology and the remark an untruth. In his observations on Cowley there is a bold conceit, which I think must have been supplied by a better poet.

He more had pleased us had he pleased us less.

This, if it is nonsense, is more like the nonsense of Dryden than of Addison, and is such as conveys an idea.. Here comes *hint* again.

What muse *but* thine can equal *hints* inspire.

To make it english, we must read some other word than *but*.

And plays in *more unbounded* verse, &c.

Unbounded has in itself the force of a superlative, and cannot admitt the comparative *more*.

On Milton he expresses your sentiments, but not as you would have expressed them.

O had the poet ne'er profaned his pen
To varnish o'er the guilt of faithless men,
His other works *might* have deserved applause..
But now the language can't support the cause.

JOHNSON.

I confess that here he has reversed the matter, and that his own cause cannot support his language.

TOOKE.

What has *the cause* to do with the *other* works? If Milton was a republican, is that a reason why, while his bad angels are in hell, his good ones should be in purgatory? He might forsooth have succeded in scenes of grandeur, if he *never* had written in defence of the commonwealth. It is indeed time that Addison should "*bridle in his struggling muse.*"

JOHNSON.

Sir, let us call the ostler, and put her into the stable for the night. She has a good many blemishes, and winces more than one would have suspected from her sleek and fleshy appearance.

TOOKE.

She gives some indication too of having been among the vetches.

JOHNSON.

To be grave on it, metaphor is inapplicable to personification.

TOOKE.

I hear, doctor, what any one may easily suppose, that your acquaintance is greatly sought among the ladies. Now, for their benefit, and for the gentlemen too who write novels and romances, I would request you to exert your authority in repressing the term *our hero*. These worthy people seem utterly unaware that the expression turns their narrative into ridicule. Even on light and ludicrous subjects, it destroys that illusion which the mind creates to itself in fiction; and I have often wished it away when I have found it in Tom Jones. While we are interested in a story we wish to see nothing of the author or of ourselves.

JOHNSON.

I detest, let me tell you, your difficulties and exceptions, your frivolity and fastidiousness.. one great writer in one language! three in another! pray how many do you allow to Greece!

TOOKE.

I would not interrupt you, doctor; thinking it of all things the most indecorous. England has many great writers, Rome has many: but languages do not retain their purity in the hands even of these. Whenever I think of Greece, I think with astonishment and awe; for the language and the nation seem indestructible.. Long before Homer,

nd from Homer to Epictetus, there must have ɔeen an uninterrupted series of admirable authors, ılthough we have lost the earliest of them, both before :he poet and after. For no language can hold its ɔreath one whole century: it becomes, if not ex-:inct, very defective and corrupted, if no great writer fosters it and gives it exercise in that period. What a variety of beauty, what a prodigality and exuberance of it in the Greek! Even in its last it exists in all its freshness. The letter which the mother of Saint Chrysostom addressed to that enthusiast in his youth, is far more eloquent, far more powerful in thought and sentiment, than any thing in Xenophon or Plato. That it is genuine cannot be doubted; for it abounds in tenderness, which saints never do, and is concise, which Chrysostom is not.

JOHNSON.

Greece ought to be preserved and guarded by the rulers of the world, as a cabinet of gems, open and belonging to them all. Whatever is the fate of other countries, whatever changes may be introduced, whatever laws imposed, whatever tributes exacted, she should preserve her lineaments uneffaced. Her ancient institutions and magistracies should be sanctioned to her, in gratitude for the inestimable blessings she has conferred on

us. There is no more danger that republicanism would be contagious from it, than from a medal of Cimon or Epaminondas. To Greece is owing the conversation we hold together: to Greece is owing the very city in which we hold it; its wealth, its power, its equity, its liberality. These are among her earlier benefits: her later are not less. We owe to her the better part of that ritual, of those prayers, by which the divine wrath (let us hope) may be averted from the offences of our prosperity.

TOOKE.

I would rather see this regeneration, than Viscount Corinth or Marquis Lacedemon; than conduct to her carriage the Duchess Œnoanda, or even than dance with lady Ogygia, or lady Peribœa. We may expect the worthy baronet, sir Acamas Erechthyoniades, high sheriff of Mycenæ, if more fashionable systems should prevail, to be created lord lieutenant and custos rotulorum of that county.

JOHNSON.

How much better and how much easier is it, to remove the dirt and rubbish from around this noble statue, and to fix on it again the arm that is broken off and lies under it, than to carve it anew into some gothic form, and to set it up in

the weedy garden of an ignorant and drunken neighbour.

TOOKE.

The liberation of Greece is the heirloom of our dreams, and comes not under the cognisance even of imagination when awake. To suppose that she could resist the power of Turkey one year, would be to suppose her more valiant and heroic than she ever was. If this were possible, the most despotic governments, the most friendly to her enslaver, the most indifferent to glory, the most deaf to honour, the very dead to christianity, would lend an arm to support and save her. Nothing could be more politic, for England in particular, than to make her what Rhodes was formerly, what Malta should now be, equipt if not for the faith, equipt and always under sail against piracy; and religion would not induce her, as it would the knights of those islands, to favour the catholics in case of war.

JOHNSON.

Here our political views converge. Publish your thoughts; proclame them openly; such as these you may.

TOOKE.

It would cost me three thousand pounds to give them the requisite weight; and I believe there

are some other impediments to my enterance into the House of Commons. Nothing is fitted to the hands of a king's minister, but what is placed in them by a member of that Honorable House. They take my money, which serves them little, while my advice, which might do some good, they would reject disdainfully. As where there is omniscience there is omnipotence, so wisdom is always in proportion to power. A great man feels no want of it, and faulty arguments are only to be discovered thro a hole in the coat or breeches. We are two somnambulists who have awakened each other by meeting. We will return to our old quarters, and pick up words again now our eyes are open.

... "I would not hear a word
"Should lessen thee in my esteem."

This fault of omitting the relative *that* or *which*, is not unusual with dramatic writers: in the more ancient it is common: but we find it even in the elegant Rowe.

"Curse on the innovating hand attempts it."

In fact, it should only be omitted where a pronoun is concerned. The insertion of it, where it can be well avoided, is among the principal blemishes of ordinary writers; another is, the too fre-

quent subjunctive... if it *be*, unless it *be*, which ought never to be used where the doubt is not very strong; for it should be a very strong doubt to supplant idiom. Our best authors use *who* and *whom*, only in speaking of intellectual beings. We * do not properly say *the tree who, the horse who*. In fable however it would be right; for there they reason and speak.

JOHNSON.

The French and other moderns, I believe, never omitt those words of theirs whereby they express the relative *which* or *that*.

TOOKE.

So we are taught, and in regard to the French, truly. But in the best of the Italian writers, *che* is omitted. Machiavelli, whom you will allow me to quote where politics sit idle, has omitted it twice in one sentence.

Monstrale l'amore le porti, dicale il bene le vuoi, Mandrag. 4. "I am happy to find from the letter you wrote me, that you enjoy good health." Here *that* is omitted rightly after *letter*, which it could not well be between the words *me* and *you* The rejection of it in the proper place is a cause of peculiar ele-

* Fashionable writers disregard such rigorous authorities. "At a spot marked with the feet of horses *who* were conducted to it..." &c. &c. *Old Mortality*.

gance; for it bears heavy on our language. The Romans were fortunate to avoid it by means of the *infinitive* of their verbs; and perhaps more fortunate still in having so many words to express *but*, another sad stumblingblock to us. Our language is much deformed by the necessity of its recurrence; and I know not any author who has taken great pains to avoid it where he could.

JOHNSON.

Nothing is right with you: in language, in government, we yield to Greeks and Romans. One would imagine that Addison, a Whig, might please you.

TOOKE.

Doctor, I never ask or consider or care of what party is a good man or a good writer. I have always been an admirer of Addison, and the oftener I read him, I mean his prose, the more he pleases me. Perhaps it is not so much his style, which however is easy and graceful and harmonious, as the sweet temperature of thought in which we always find him, and the attractive countenance, if you will allow me the expression, with which he meets me upon every occasion. It is very remarkable, and therefor I stopped to notice it, that not only what little strength he had, but even all his grace and ease, forsake him when he ventures into

poetry: he is even coarse and abject, and copies the grammatical faults of his predecessors, without copying any thing else of their manner, good or bad. Were I inclined to retaliate on you, my good doctor Johnson, I might come against you in the rear of others, and throw my stone against you on the side of Gray. Prejudiced or unprejudiced against him, I wonder you did not catch at the beard of his bard streaming *like a meteor*. He did not take the idea from the Moses of Michel-Angelo, nor from the Padre Eterno of Raffael in his Vision of Ezekiel, but from the Hudibras of Butler.

> This *hairy meteor* did denounce
> The fall of sceptres and of crowns.

Here we have the very words.

Until you pointed out to me my partiality for the Greeks and Romans, I never had suspected it, having always thought that any ten pages in Barrow are fairly worth all their philosophers put together, and finding more wisdom and thought in him, distinct from theology, than in any other man. If his eloquence is somewhat less pure than that of Demosthenes and Thucydides, who have reached perfection, his mind is as much more capacious and elevated, as the Sun is than the Moon and Mercury.

JOHNSON.

It is better and pleasanter to talk generally on great and high subjects than minutely. Who would examine, that could expatiate?

TOOKE.

None can expatiate safely who do not previously examine; and we are not always to consider in our disquisitions, what is pleasantest, but sometimes what is usefullest. I wonder, in matters of reason, how any thing little or great can excite ill humour: for, as many steps as they lead us toward reason, just so many, one would think, they should lead us away from passion. Why should these dry things have discomposed you? If I ride a broomstick, must I, like a witch, raise a storm? In reality a great deal of philosophy, a great deal not only of logic but of abstruse and recondite metaphysics will be found in etymology; the part least pleasing to you in our conversation. I do not wonder that such men as Varro and Cesar studied it and wrote upon it; but I doubt whether the one or the other went very deeply into the business. It is astonishing that the more learned among the Greeks knew absolutely nothing of it. Admirably as they used the most beautiful of languages, they cared no more about its etymologies than a statuary cares about the chemical properties of his marble.

JOHNSON.

I will present to you a curiosity in the latin: for surely it is curious that the Romans should have used two words of origin quite contrary, for the same thing. To *promise*, was not only *promittere*, but *recipere*; the authority is Cicero.

TOOKE.

The reason is plain...

JOHNSON.

As you are fond of reasons and innovations, I would consign to you willingly two or three words on which to exercise your ingenuity. I would allow you to write *monsterous* with an e, on the same principle as we write *leacherous* and *treacherous*.

TOOKE.

Liberally offered and gratefully accepted. Incroachment may sometimes be the follower of kindness: am I going too far, in asking that *rough*, *tough*, *sough*, *enough*, may be guided by *bluff*, *rebuff*, *cuff*? Why should not *cough* be spelt *coff*? why not *dough* and *although*, *dow*, *altho*; for the benefit of strangers and learners, to say nothing of economy in letters; the only kind of economy on which we reformers can ever hope to be heard? As there is also a cry against the letter s, I would remove it from *onwards*, *towards*, *for-*

wards, backwards, where it is improper, however sanctioned by the custom of our best authors, and use it only where the following word begins with *d* or *t*, for the sake of euphony. On the same principle I approve of *saith*, &c. instead of *says*, &c. where the next word begins with *s*, or *z*, or *ce* and *ci*.

Persons very unlearned, such as Swift and others, have from their natural acuteness perceived the utility of *fixing*, as they call it, our language.

JOHNSON.

Sir, I have been patient: I have heard you call doctor Swift a very unlearned man. Malignity of whiggism! I give him up to you however: he was not very learned; but you ought to have spared and favoured him; for he was irreverential to the great, and to his God.

TOOKE.

Doctor, I am inclined to believe that God is as fond of his lively children as of his dull ones; and would as willingly see them give their pocket-money to their indigent and afflicted neighbours, as offer their supplications, or even their thanks, to him. I may be mistaken: so many good and wise men have been, that in all these matters, I deliver my opinion, but do not inculcate nor insist

upon it. When I spoke of Swift and others, as very unlearned, I meant in the etymologies and diversities of our language. Swift wrote admirably...

JOHNSON.

Yes, sir, and was more original than you and all your tribe.

TOOKE.

I am willing that a Tory should both for ever be an original, and be incapable of having a copyist. But, doctor, when I was younger, I read Swift as often as perhaps you or any other may have done; not for the sake of his thoughts and opinions, but of his style, which I would carry with me and employ.

JOHNSON.

Addison's is better.

TOOKE.

What I admire in Addison I cannot so easily make use of. Doctor, if you or I attempted to imitate the mien and features of a Cupid or a Zephyr, I doubt whether we should quite succede. Swift is not so original as you think him. He was a peruser of rare books; for, zealous as he appears in favour of the classics, he liked nothing that was not strange. In one of his searches, probably, after such reading, he tells us he first met Harley.

I do not mention Cyrano de Bergerac, and some others, who have given him ideas on the ground-plan of his works; but I mean to bring you where you may find the thoughts. The most beautiful of them is owing to Plutarch. That simily of the geographers and sands of Africa is taken from the first sentence in the *Life of Theseus:* I have traced a great number of his other fancies and reflexions, in writers less known and less esteemed.

JOHNSON.

Plutarch has many good ones.

TOOKE.

Yes, doctor; and altho his style is not valued by the critics, I could inform them that there are in Plutarch many passages of exquisite beauty, in regard to style, derived perhaps from authors much more ancient.

JOHNSON.

Inform them of nothing, sir, if you wish to live peaceably. Let them take from you, but do not offer it. They will pass over your freshest thoughts, as if they had been long and intimately known to them, and shew your abstruser (to them incomprehensible) as the only ones worthy of a remark.

TOOKE.

Among these hogs of Westphaly, there is not one with a snout that can penetrate into my in-

closure, prompt as they are to batten on it and bespatter it, and to trample it down as they grunt and trot along. Doctor, you have been keeping admirable time to my words, with your head and body.

JOHNSON.

Is that sentence yours? I like the period.

TOOKE.

Let any one claim it whom it suits as well: I grant and resign it freely. Periods I willingly throw away.. but not upon things like these.

JOHNSON.

And now, sir, what plan have you for fixing our language?

TOOKE.

This is impossible in any: but it is possible to do much, and an authority like yours would have effected it, in perpetuating the orthography. On the contrary, I observe in your Dictionary some quotations, in which the words are spelt differently from what I find them in the originals; nor have you admitted all those in Littleton, who compiled his Latin Dictionary at a recent period.

JOHNSON.

First, I wrote the words as people now receive them; then, as to Littleton, many of his are vulgar

TOOKE.

The more English for that: no expression, be it only free from indecency, is so vulgar, that a man of learning and genius may not formerly have used it: but there are many so frivolous and fantastical, that they cannot, to the full extent of the word, ever become vulgar. There are but three places where such bad language is tolerated and acknowledged; the boxing-ring, the race-course, and the House of Commons.

JOHNSON.

I could wish our Senate to have deserved as well of ours as the Roman did of theirs. Illiterate men, and several such are among the correspondents of Cicero, write with as much urbanity and purity as himself; and it is remarkable that the only one of them defective in these qualities is Marcus Antonius. But pray give me some more instances in which the spelling should be improved.

TOOKE.

Many must escape me, and others are but analogical: I will then bring forward only those which occurr principally. The very word which has just passed my lips, *occurr*, is written improperly with a single *r*. The impropriety is demonstrated by its preterite, which would be *occured;* for the sign of the preterite is *ed*, in similar verbs,

not *red.* The same may be remarked on the verbs *rebel, compel,* &c. *aver, demur, appal, acquit, permit, refit, confer,* &c. If these were printed as they ought to be, strangers would more easily know that the accent is on the final syllable.

We ourselves in some instances have lost the right accent of words. In my youth he would have been ridiculed who placed it upon the first syllable of *confiscated, contemplative,* at which the ear revolts: in many other compounds we thrust it thus back with equal precipitancy and rudeness *.

Among the words of which the accent has been transposed to their disadvantage, are *confessor* and *convex,* from the second to the first. *Sojourn* is by no means inharmonious, if you place the accent where it ought to be, as in *adjourn;* but you render it one of the harshest in our language, by your violation of *analogy* in perverting it. The com-

* We are arrived at such barbarism, that it was necessary for Wordsworth to place an accent on the second syllable of *indúrated. Memorials of a Tour on the Continent,* p. 43.

Such consequence having been given to *cons* and *ins,* we cannot with justice refuse it to *ens* and *disses.* We shall be *ènnobled,* and others be *displeased.* I have been out of England ten years, but I think I can recollect a *convènticle* being called a *cónventicle.*

mon people stil pronounce *contrary* with the accent where it should be; a proof of a better ear than we have, as far as one word goes. We throw it back on the first in *acceptable*, and not in *accessible*; yet it is on the second in *accept*, and on the first in *access*.

In conversation we often, indeed mostly, use *'em* for *them*: why not in writing? I would always do it after *th*; as *with 'em*. In the Scotch dialect *wi'* for *with* has peculiar grace *.

Nothing is absurder than that, writing the aspirate, we should use it in some words, omitt it in others. In polished society I have remarked none aspirated, excepting *happy* and *hard*, with the substantives, tho *a* precedes many, not *an*. Is it that we sigh (for to aspirate is nothing else in the mode of utterance) as much at what we wish in the former, as at what we feel in the latter?

JOHNSON.

I do not know: if your observation is just, it must be so; tho the remark seems out of your line and beyond your feeling.

TOOKE.

It is curious that *fortune* and *happiness* are in

* In that animated ode of Burns, the most animated that ever issued from the lips of man, how incomparably better are the words *Scots wha hae wi'* than *who have with!*

no language allied, nearly or remotely, to virtue or merit. In ours they are both of them named from chance.

What if within the moon's fair shining sphere,
What if in every other star unseen,
Of other worlds he *happily* should hear...

for *haply*.

The Greeks were more pious, one would imagine, than our ancestors. They entertained the same opinion about fortune, but believed that happiness was the gift of good genii or gods.. eudemonia.

JOHNSON.

Pray tell me now, sir, what we should do? Will you put me upon your knee and teach me? Should we pronounce all our aspirated syllables as such, or none?

TOOKE.

I would rather say none: but certainly we should no more add a mark of aspiration to a word wherin it is not used, than a mark of interrogation.

JOHNSON.

You are a strange man, sir! why, this is true too!... can you be still a whig?

TOOKE.

No, doctor, nor ever was. I wore one livery, and threw it off as an incumbrance; I will not

wear another that is both an incumbrance and a disgrace. I have never been even a swindler; now I must not only be a swindler, but a gambler too, and a liar and an impostor, if I would hold the rank my forces entitle me to amongst the whigs.

JOHNSON.

Swindler, as we understand it, is the worse character of the two.

TOOKE.

By no means. Any gambler may gamble every day and night in the seven; and most of them do; while few swindlers can swindle above the half; and their stakes are lighter, and such as can affect only their personalities: an hour's attendance on the public, when they have nothing else to do, and from a station no less secure than commanding, and then immediately a quiet and long recess from the management of affairs.

JOHNSON.

That sounds well: it comes from a full cup tho a cracked one: and yet you are a bad man, sir, to form no affinities; a solitary sceptic; the blind man in *blind man's buff*, unable to stand a moment on either side, or to fix upon any one about him.

TOOKE.

All this is true, doctor. I am a bad man, but

exactly in the contrary of the word's original meaning, which I thank you for reminding me of. A *bad* man is a *bade* man or *bidden* man; a slave in other words; and the same idea was attached to the expression by the Italians and the French, while their language and they had a character, in *cattivo* and *chetif*, and by us in *caitif*, men in no other condition than that wherin they must do as they are *bid*. We should ourselves have been in no higher a condition, if we had not resisted what, in palaces, and churches and colleges, was called legitimate power: and indeed we should still be, rather than men, a pliant unsubstantial herbage, springing up from under the smoky, verminous, unconcocted doctrine of passive obedience; to be carted off by our kings amidst their carols, and cocked and ricked and cut, and half-devoured, half-trampled and wasted, in the pinfold of our priesthood.

If we take away a letter from the words I have stated, we add one with as little discernment to *therefor* and *wherefor*: we should as reasonably write *thereofe*, *whereofe*, *thereine*, *whereine*: strictly, it would be better to take away one *e* more, and write *therfor*, &c. I know the origin of the error: the origin may *explane*, but not *excuse*. It is this: the ancients wrote *therforre*:

the useless *r* was removed from an infinity of words; and those who removed it in this instance, were little aware that they had better left it, unless they also took away the *e*.

I would write *until*, *til*, and *stil*: the latter word both for analogy and for distinction from the adjective *still*. I mean I would write in this manner if I had any grave authority before me; for without it laws in language are no more to be infringed or modified than laws in politics. I do not see why *little*, *able*, *probable*, &c. should not be written *littil*, *abil*, *probabil*: as *civil* forms *civility*, so *abil* forms *ability*, *probabil* forms *probability*: the others, as we corruptly use them, form *ablety* and *probablety*. There is also another reason: in verse there is an hiatus when they come before a vowel, which hiatus could not exist if we followed what analogy prescribes. I strongly object to *subtle* and *subtlety*, and would propose *subtil* and *subtility*.

Why should *proceed* and *succeed* be spelt in one way, *precede* and *accede* in another? Why should not the two former be written in the second syllable like the two latter?

JOHNSON.

I know not: I think it would be better.

TOOKE.

I do not go so far in these matters as your friend

Elphinstone; and altho I would be a reformer, my reform should be temperate and topical. Many have written *exil* for banishment: I would constantly do so, and *exile* for banished man.

JOHNSON.

The distinction has not been observed by any one, and would be commodious.

TOOKE.

One would imagine from the spelling that *complain* and *explain* were of the same origin. To avoid this error, I would follow the authors who have written the latter word *explane;* and the rather, as the substantive is *explanation*, not *explaination*, nor *explaint*. *Passenger* and *messenger* are coarse and barbarous, for *passager* and *messager*, and nothing the better for having been adopted into polite society.

Middleton, we have seen, writes *declame*, and elegantly. Milton writes *sovran* and *foren*, equally so: for neither the pronunciation nor the etymology authorizes the vitiated mode in common use. These writers may be considered as modern, and must be considered as learned and eloquent. Until men who are more so write differently, these shall be my guides.

There is hardly a writer of the Elizabethan age who will not induce us to hesitate on our spelling,

or rather, who will not suggest some improvement. *Abbot*, from *abbas*, should be spelt *abbat*, as Tanner spels it. Jonson, in his verses to Wroth, says,

In autumn at the *partrich* mak'st a flight.

I would write the word so, if it were for no other reason than that we write *ostrich* in the same manner. He and Shakespear, I am inclined to think often wrote *fier* as well as *fire*: we still retain the trace of it in the adjective *fiery*. In those poets it occurs as a dissyllable, altho in the printed copies it is *fire*. I find it in the poem I have quoted, which pleases me better than any other of the same author. I only wish he had omitted the last lines, taken from Juvenal.

JOHNSON.

I remember them, for a word to be corrected.

When thy latest sand is spent,
Thou mayest think life a thing but lent.

It would then be too late: *when* should be *ere*.

TOOKE.

True.

JOHNSON.

Fire and *sire* and *hour* and *four* are dissyllables in the old poets, and *year* and *sure*, while *entire* and *desire* are trisyllables; *contrary*, a quadrisyllable. They spelt indifferently and wrote

arbitrarily. Shakespear takes no liberties of this kind, unauthorized in fact or analogy by others, and writers more scholastic.

TOOKE.

They favour my proposition, of spelling by *il* what we spell by *le;* such as *humbil, dazzil, tickil:* for in whatever way they wrote the word, they make a trisyllable of *humbled* and *dazzled* and *tickled.* Shakespeare in *Henry* 6 makes one of *English.*

JOHNSON.

I know not what advantages we can obtain from a perception of crudities and barbarisms, unless it be that it enables us to estimate the more correctly the great improvements we have made in later times. Who would read Chaucer and Spenser for their language?

TOOKE.

Spenser I would not; for he is among the most inelegant of our writers in prose or verse, delightful as are many parts of his poetry; but Chaucer I would read again and again, both for his poetry and his language.

JOHNSON.

I suppose, sir, you preferr the dialect of Thomson, a whig, to Spenser's.

TOOKE.

No, doctor; his is worse still; but there are images and feelings in his *Winter*, in comparison with which the liveliest in Spenser are faint.

JOHNSON.

And those too, no doubt, on the same subject in the Georgics!

TOOKE.

Beyond a question. It appears to me that there is more poetry in it, than in the whole of that elaborate poem, beautiful as it is in versification and in language, both of which are wanting in almost every place to Thomson.

JOHNSON.

Oh! you do acknowledge then that the versification is elaborate, and the language beautiful!

TOOKE.

Doctor, I hate carping. Where much is good in a man or a poem I would always mention it; and where in the same man or poem there is a little bad, I would pass it over.

JOHNSON.

What is the bad, sir, in the Georgics? Come, I have you now off the ground: your strength, such as it is, has left you.

TOOKE.

May all men's strength leave them when they would make invidious objections!

JOHNSON.

Rare subterfuge! Virgil is a dead prince, sir; you cannot hurt him.

TOOKE.

Far be the wish from me! I would act toward him as the pious ancients did toward the dead: I would wash him first, and afterward perfume him with the most precious unguents.

JOHNSON.

Up with your sleeves then, and begin the washing. Here, take the Georgics: I usually carry them about me.

TOOKE.

I will not dwell upon the verses after

Tethys emat omnibus undis;

but really those eight appear to me like an excrescence on the face of a beautiful boy.

JOHNSON.

They are puerile, are they? a blemish, a deformity!

TOOKE.

In honest truth I think so.

JOHNSON.

You have turned over only one leaf: the faults must lie thick.

TOOKE.

Somewhat so. Beginning again at the eighty-

first line, I find the *earth* ending that and all the five following, with one exception, *agros*, *arva*, *terræ*, *agros*, flammis, *terræ*.

JOHNSON.

I do not credit you.

TOOKE.

Take the book.

JOHNSON.

No, sir; I will not take the book: read on.

TOOKE.

In the next page, *arvis*, *arva*, *arva*, close the verse within twelve successive lines. In the next beyond *moveri*, *removit*, *repressit*, one after the other; and immediately after "extund*eret* artes," "quær*eret* herbam," and "excud*eret* ignem." Three more pages, and the words *convivia curant* are followed in the next verse by "*cura*sque resolvit." May I express my delight at...

JOHNSON.

No, sir; no sir! no delight about any thing! Spit your spite.

TOOKE.

Since you are so affable in your commands, I will procede then. Beginning from the 406th verse there are thirteen which end with spondaic words. In the second book the line

Et gens illa quidem sumptis non tarda pharetris

is another excrescence; and in the following we find again *tardumque* saporem.

JOHNSON.

Sir, can you construe that line? I doubt it.

TOOKE.

Instruct me then.

JOHNSON.

You, being a word-catcher, ought to know that our word *tart*, for *sharp*, corresponds with this *tardus*.

TOOKE.

I perceive the commentator gives this interpretation; a very wrong one. *Tart* is not related to *tardus*. Virgil means that the citron ripens late. Before we reach the 300th line, here are together twelve more ending with spondaic words. Now, my dear sir, do let me give utterance to my enthusiasm on O fortunatos minium.

JOHNSON.

Not a word.

TOOKE.

Let me be in raptures at sitting down, if not among the *saltus*, at least among the *lustra ferarum!* the feeling is so charmingly new. Doctor, did I hear one of them? methought I heard a growl, or something similar. *Rura* ends one line, *jura* the next. "Atque alio *patriam*".. then, with

one line between "*hinc patriam.*" "Pascitur in *magna* sylvâ," and just below, "*magnus* Olympus." Doctor, how do you construe Odor attulit auras?

JOHNSON.

That is an hypallage, sir.

TOOKE.

But construe it.

JOHNSON.

One must reverse the sense.

TOOKE.

A pretty idea of poetry. In fact the *hypallage*, of which Virgil is fonder than any other writer, is much the gravest fault in language.

JOHNSON.

What, sir! graver than solecism?

TOOKE.

Yes, doctor; in the same degree as nonsense is worse than inelegance. A boy shouts at another boy, and holds him in derision, when he finds him putting, as he calls it, the cart before the horse. Onward, if you please, and here we find again, at *currentem ilignis*, fourteen final spondees without one bacchic foot among them. And now at last we arrive at that passage which provoked you to throw poor Thomson under the triumphal car of Virgil.

Concrescunt subitæ currenti in flumine crustæ,
Undaque jam *tergo* ferratos sustinet orbes,
Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hospita plaustris.

These and the four following would make but an indifferent figure in the exercise of an Eton-boy: there is no harmony, no fluency in them; they are broken pieces of ice. What think you, after *æraque* dissiliunt *vulgò*, of *vestesque rigescunt!* Such an instance of the art of sinking you will not find in the latin, nor perhaps in any other poetry. What follows is much better; but it will bear no comparison with the Miltonian description in Thomson, of the frozen regions visited by the caravan from Cathay.

JOHNSON.

Sir, even the description of Orpheus and Eurydice could not stir your cold blood.

TOOKE.

Doctor, you have formed your judgement upon it; let me reflect and hesitate a little, before I deliver mine.

JOHNSON.

Now I would lay a wager that all this magnificence is not worth your Scotch-Cathay caravan.

TOOKE.

I would do the same.

JOHNSON.

Then, sir, you have either no sense of shame or no soul for poetry.

TOOKE.

On *shame* and *soul* the discussion might be unsatisfactory. But let us, my dear sir, survey together the character of Proteus. Nothing can be harder; unless it be myself: he must be chained to make him civil or tractable, to make him render the slightest and easiest service to any one. He had no affinity, or friendship, no community of character or country, with Orpheus and Eurydice. One would think he could have known little about them, and cared less. In a monster, for such he was, and so unfeeling and so solitary, the description is far from natural; and even in Virgil himself, who seems to have forgotten that he was not speaking in his own person, it would have been somewhat overcharged. The Homeric simily of the nightingale, and the silly tale of a head speaking when it was cut off and rolling down a river, and speaking so loud too as to make an echo on the banks, is puerile, absurd, and preposterous.

JOHNSON.

The verses on the nightingale are inharmonious, no doubt.

TOOKE.

I did not say so; but some parts are. *Mœrens, queritur, flet, miserabile, mœstis.* Surely we do not want all these words at once, to express one feeling. *Observans nido implumes detraxit* is as inharmonious as any verse can easily be made. How much better would it have been, if Proteus had said little on the subject, and if Cyrene had given the description.

JOHNSON.

You know nothing of poetry, but that last remark is true: who suggested it?

TOOKE.

Doctor Johnson; when he favoured me with the volume which I now return to him.

JOHNSON.

Sir, you carry your revolutionary and chaotic principles into the fields and groves, into the woods and mountains, and render more fierce and gloomy the winds and tempests and eternal snows. You have no love of order even in works of art.

TOOKE.

Doctor, we were talking just now of dissyllables and trisyllables and Chaucer. He writes,

With Theseus the squire principal.

JOHNSON.

If you quote such metre, you may quote that also which was

Written by William Prynne esquire, the
Year of our Lord six hundred thirty-three.

TOOKE.

Never did the muses sail to their antipodes so expeditiously, as under the steerage of their new Tiphys, if you on this occasion will let me call you so.

JOHNSON.

Call me any thing, sir, rather than call Thompson a writer of english.

TOOKE.

Affectation is his greatest fault; and it is a matter of wonder to me that he seldom errs on any other side.

JOHNSON.

I do not remember that he confuses, as the Scotch and Irish do perpetually, *shall* and *will*.

TOOKE.

We ourselves confound them without knowing it; but idiomatically.

JOHNSON.

In what manner? Good writers never do.

TOOKE.

For instance, *You will be burnt if you touch*

the tea-urn. Shall I be burnt if I touch the tea-urn? Here the action and time are the same, yet the words differ. In fact, *will I* can only be used in the rebutment of a question; as when a person asks, *Will you or will you not?* and the reply, instead of affirmation or negative, is angrily, *Will I or will I not?* in which is understood, *Do you ask me thus?* To another we say *Shall I?* and he replies *If you will.*

These things, doctor, would appear very trifling to very trifling men; but not to you, who cannot be less curious in the philosophy of a language than in its etymology.

JOHNSON.

Let us stop where we are, and while we are innocent. Philosophy in these matters draws us away to analysis: the dry *seta equina* of analysis breaks into pieces, in one or two of which we soon descry the restless heads and wriggling tails of metaphysics. Sir, metaphysics lead to materialism, and materialism to atheism. Those who do not see this, see nothing: but there are more who see it than will confess it. Of what value is any thing, altho it should lead at first to some truth, even less dry and sterile, if in its progression it renders men insincere, and in its termination unhappy? Anatomize words, flay, dissect, eviscerate language,

but keep your faith out of the crucible, for the daily use and sustenance of your family.

TOOKE.

I began to fear, doctor, that you would have concluded your sentence in another manner.

JOHNSON.

In what manner, sir?

TOOKE.

That you would have said, *to go to market with*, for the daily use and sustenance of my family. My faith, I do assure you, I keep both out of the crucible and out of the *aqua regia;* another great melter and transmuter. My dear sir, I would divert the gathering storm of your anger by any propitiation and concession.

JOHNSON.

Rogue!

TOOKE.

Excellently and most opportunely introduced. I could say something upon that word too; but I doubt whether it would be quite so agreeable to you as another of which I was thinking. In your reading of our ancient poets, particularly our dramatists, you must have observed that *kind* is frequently used for *nature*. This is a beautiful feature in our language. Our ancestors identified *nature* with *kindness*. I love our old modes of

thinking in most things, and of speaking in many. We have several ancient words used at present in a different sense from what they were formerly . . . *rogue* for instance.

JOHNSON.

No sedition, sir! no vague allusions! no contempt of authority! I know who rogues are, as well as you do; but I abstain from throwing a firebrand into their houses, and lighting the populace to pillage and murder.

TOOKE.

Well judged: the populace has no right to any such things.

JOHNSON.

Strange! marvellous! you enunciate even these sentences, the most detestable, the most impious, the most seditious, uninflamed, unwarmed; like your chemists, who pour from one bottle into another, just as unconcernedly, I know not what pestiferous and heavy air of theirs, if report speaks truly, corking it down, until they can find something to set the whole of it in a blaze; shewing us that what is the lowest in its nature is the most destructive in its application.

TOOKE.

Doctor, in the asbestine quality of my mind, with the flames and faggots on both sides, you ap-

pear to see a miracle: if you could see more clearly, you would discover in it christianity without one.

JOHNSON (*aside*).

I did not imagine that this logical wronghead could balance and swing and dandle me so easily.

I do not recollect any expression in Chaucer worth retaining and not retained.

TOOKE.

What think you of *swough*, the long-continued sound of wind?

a *swough*
As thof a storme should brasten every bough.
Palamon and Arcite.

JOHNSON.

It sounds grandly: there is something of a melancholy and a lonely wildness in it.

TOOKE.

The Scotch retain it still, spelling it *sugh*.

JOHNSON.

Let them keep it, sir, to themselves: I would not give a straw for it. We want neither harsh words nor obsolete ones.

TOOKE.

Suppose we found in Chaucer some words less harsh in their pronunciation than they appear at present; and others, if not less so, yet useful for variety and for rhyme: such are *beforne*, before,

withouten, without, *somdel*, somewhat, *astonned*, astonished, *brast* and *brasten*, burst or broken, and many more.

JOHNSON.

Let our language rest where it is.

TOOKE.

Languages, like men, when they have rested long and totally, grow heavy and plethoric: we must renew their juices, and bring them back into their native air.

We have *presently*, but want *futurely*, used by Fletcher in the *Two noble Kinsmen*.

Among the rich furniture of our ancestors which we cast aside, may be reckoned a certain two-handed instrument of great utility and strength. *By* and *of* were employed by them at their option. Shakespear says

Unwhipt of Justice.

We now abandon altogether the better usage. I would have reserved both.

We use the word *bat* for various things; among the rest for that animal which partakes the nature of bird and mouse: why not call it, at least in poetry, what Ben Jonson does, *flittermouse?* The word in all respects is better; it is more distinguishing, more descriptive, and our language is by one the richer for it.

JOHNSON.

The reasons are valid and unobjectionable.

TOOKE.

The verb, to *beat*, is the same in its present tense and in its preterite; so irregularly and improperly, that you cannot but have observed how people avoid the use of it in the latter.

JOHNSON.

The Romans did the same in their *ferio*. Instead of taking a preterite from it, they use *percussi*. I think however that I have somewhere seen the preterite, *bate*.

TOOKE.

We had our choice either to follow the inflexion of *cheat* or *eat:* we took the latter; and then would have neither. I am afraid of reminding you where you probably last met with *bate*, which you seem looking after.

JOHNSON.

Subdue your blushes, my gentle sir, and conduct me back to the place, be it where it may.

TOOKE.

The Irishman in Fielding's *Tom Jones* says, "He *bate* me."

JOHNSON.

What we hear from an Irishman we are not overfond of repeating, whether in grammar or

fact: but in this case our risibility is excited by the circumstances, rather than the language, altho the language too has its share in it. The dialect is hibernian.

TOOKE.

We certainly should not either smile at the expression in a vulgar countryman of our own, nor condemn it in a learned discourse from the pulpit.

JOHNSON.

I would not hesitate to employ it in the graver composition.

HORNE.

Nor I: for authors much richer both in thought and language, than any now living or any recently deceased, have done so.

JOHNSON.

If we begin to reinstate old words, we shall finish by admitting new ones.

TOOKE.

There would be the less danger of that, as there would be the less need. Yet even new words may be introduced with good effect, and particularly when the subject is ludicrous.

JOHNSON.

Phrynicus and Julius Pollux animadvert with severity on Menander, for inventing new words, and for using such others as were unknown in

Attica: and perhaps this is the reason why he was frequently vanquished by Polemon, in the contest for the prize of comedy. Gellius tells us, on the authority I think of Apollodorus, that, altho he wrote a hundred and five pieces, he was the victor but in eight.

TOOKE.

And if we could recover them all, we should find probably those eight the very worst amongst them, and the only ones that fairly could admitt a competition. When Menander asked Polemon whether he did not blush at being his vanquisher, the answer (I can well imagine) was another such suffusion, and not, as would have been the case if there were any room for it, that the inelegance or inexactness of Menander turned the countenance of the judges from him. He was considered by the best critics of succeding ages as the most attic of the Athenians; and certainly was not the less so for employing those expressions, novel or foren, which suited the characters he introduced. A word may be excellent in a dialogue, which would deteriorate and deform an oration. Julius Pollux, I remember, disapproves of many words used by Plato and Herodotus. Now altho Plato is often flat and insipid, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus demonstrates by examples, yet I cannot think he ever

used a term improperly or unfitly. In regard to Herodotus, his style I consider as the most proper, the most pure, the most simply and inelaborately harmonious, of any author in any language. His genius, what rarely happens, is well seconded and sustained by his spirit of research and his delight in knowledge. He has been censured for a deficiency of elevation. Many can judge of elevation in phraseology; fewer of that which is attained by an elastic vigour in the mind, keeping up easily a broad continuance of imaginative thought. This is almost as necessary to matter of fact as to poetry, if the matter of fact is worthy to be impressed on the memory or understanding.

How much better is *disherited* than *disinherited? innerest* than *innermost?* How much more properly is *tongue* written *tong*, *fruit frute*, *suit sute*, *friend frend*, *atchieve acheve!* These are not new modes; we find them in the time of Spenser, and most of them in his works. He writes the verbs, *wil* and *shal;* he also writes *til* and *ontil.* He would not do so unless others, whom he esteemed as good authors, had given him the example; for his rhyme, which he favours at any rate, did not exact it.

We never say *patriarchical*, yet we say *monarchical* and *anarchical:* harsh words! Since

the choice is left me by prescription in the one, by analogy in the other, I would constantly write *anarcal* and *monarcal.*

Menage tells us that he did the contrary of what was done by the Academy. " They fill their dictionary," says he, " with words in use: I take greater care, in my etymologies, of those which are no longer so, that they may not be quite forgotten."

JOHNSON.

Both did right. It is very interesting to trace the features of a language in every stage of its existence. I wish you would do it, M. Tooke; I have done enough: it must be the exercise of learned leisure, and not of him whose daily bread is dipt in ink.

TOOKE.

Doctor, there was a time when I sighed at what raised my admiration: I thought it was over: your last words renew it. I am not the adviser of pensions: I should be happy to see the greater part of them struck off: but more gladly still should I read an act of parliament, in pursuance of which ten were established in perpetuity for our ten best writers. Five of them should enjoy five hundred a year, the others three, closing only when preferment of higher value were given them.

JOHNSON.

And pray, sir, would you admitt the partisan of rebellion to the advantages of this endowment?

TOOKE.

I would exclude none whatever for his opinions, political or theological. The minister who had granted such an indulgence to his opponent, would indemnify himself by the acquisition of worthier supporters, attached to him by his magnanimity: the partisan of rebellion who accepted it, would render but little service to his cause. The whole sum they expended, is barely what you throw upon the desk of the lowest scribbler, appointed secretary (we will suppose) to the board of admiralty, for some smutty song or pious pasquinade; barely what a vulgar commissary gains in one day's contract for bullocks; and therefor on neither side of the house would the motion find, consistently, any opponent who can spell and cast accounts. Since the form of our constitution is not such, as admits every man of superior genius to the place he might occupy in one more popular, so slight amends may surely be made for the privation. I venture to assert, that it would render our government more respected abroad, than our armies and navies render it, and more beloved at home than our assessments and excise.

JOHNSON.

Ay, ay! among the ten we should find your name, no doubt!

TOOKE.

No, sir, my name is not to be where ten are at a time: besides, there is no minister whose exclusion of me would be unjustifiable. These two considerations make me speak openly and warmly. Few authors could recommend the motion: I dare to do it, excited by the neglected genius of my adversary here, and the glory no less neglected of my country.

JOHNSON.

I would hardly be so ministerial on this point as you are. I would encrease the value of the pension, by making it depend on the vote of parliament.

TOOKE.

This is better: we may suppose three names recommended by a committee on every vacancy...

JOHNSON.

I perceive that you, in the midst of letters, turn aside to the political.

TOOKE.

I wish, in the midst of the political, our representatives were turned for a moment to the consideration of letters. What I recommend is prac-

ticable and uncostly. Hardly one member of the Honorable House is interested in recommending a relative or friend; and I doubt whether, in all the ten to be chosen, more than two or three would be nominated on an unpaid bill, by coach-maker or fishmonger or tailor.

JOHNSON.

Ah false suitor! you have unwoven with your own hands Penelope's bright web: you might have left it to Penelope herself: night would have closed again on it, in scattered filaments.

TOOKE.

No, my dear sir, I have not hurt the web; I have only puffed away a design of it which was never designed to be executed. Cadmus, who found letters, found also the dragon's teeth, to be sown amongst them and to consume them.

The word *Tartar*, we are informed of late, is properly *Tatar* in its own language. Let it be so: this is no sufficient reason why we also should be *Tatars* or speak *Tatar*. The word *Tartar* has been received amongst us some centuries, and invariably used. *Cassibellaunus* and *Britannia* are not exactly the British words: yet a Roman would have been ridiculed who, a hundred years after the reception of them, should rather have inserted the original British in his history.

JOHNSON.

Here I agree with you; and am reminded of an observation I made the other day, that some recent authors write *Tartarian* as the adjective of *Tartar: Tartarian* is that of *Tartarus: Tartar* is itself an adjective.

TOOKE.

Our language, sir, is losing a little of its propriety every year. It becomes more trim by its espaliers; but I wish I could say its fruit is the better for the reduction of its branches.

We have *anger* and *wrath* in our old language; *resentment, rage, pique,* the worse and weaker parts of the feeling, come from the French.

JOHNSON.

You place too little reliance upon good authorities.

TOOKE.

Good writers are authorities for only what is good, and by no means and in no degree for what is bad, which may be found even in them.

JOHNSON.

How then decide upon what is really bad or good?

TOOKE.

By exciting our ratiocination upon it, and by comparing with it other modes of expression.

Many of those who are generally called good writers are afraid of writing as they speak. This is a worse than panic fear; and is the principal reason why our moderns are less rich and less easy than their predecessors. They are reluctant to mount up above the times of Dryden; not indeed a mean writer in prose or poetry, singularly terse in his moral sentences and felicitous in his allusions, but in copiousness and beauty of language, no more comparable to Barrow and Taylor, and some others, than the canal in St. Jamesis park is comparable to the Thames. If we wish to breathe freely and largely, and to fill our innermost breasts with the spirit of our language, we must ascend higher.

JOHNSON.

The most curious thing I know in our language, is, that *ever* and *never* should be synonymous. Can you account for this?

TOOKE.

The *mai* of the Italians, in like manner, serves both purposes. *Were you never so just* is the same in its meaning as *Were you ever so just.* The one is *were you never in your life so just as upon this occasion:* the other, howsoever *just you were.*

JOHNSON.

This satisfies me. I should myself have given the same solution.

TOOKE.

It must then, doctor, be a clear and easy one.

JOHNSON (*aside*).

The man's words are ambiguous; altho it is plain that he is not aware of it; for nothing was ever so serene as his countenance, so unembarassed as his manner, so polite as his whole demeanour. Can this fellow now be in his heart a whig? almost a republican! impossible!

TOOKE.

Rind, bind, mind, find, wind (the verb), *kind, blind*, &c. are better written as they were formerly, with a final *e*, as also *child, wild, mild;* that the sound may accord with the spelling, which should always be the case where no very powerful reason interposes its higher authority. *Ache* why not *ake*. *Heighth* and *neighbour* should be written *highth* and *nighbour:* the former comes from *high*, not *heigh!* the latter from *nigh*, not *neigh*.

Those who polish language, like those who clean pictures, often rubb away the true colouring. Roughness, you will tell me, is removed by the process of the moderns. I could adduce no few instances to the contrary. Now do you imagine that the fashionable way of writing *empress's son*, if we *could* pronounce it accordingly, would be better than *empressis?* No other language in the world (for though the serpent could once speak

he could never write) presents four *esses* in conjunction. The final *s* hath nothing to do with, what Addison and others have substituted for it, *his*: it is among our few declined cases.

JOHNSON.

Who would not rather say *son of the empress?*

TOOKE.

I talk of what exists in the language, not of what is best in it: nor indeed would your alteration be preferable in all contingencies. What, for instance, think you of this? *We have heard of the ill state of health of the son of the empress of Russia.* The double genitive ought to be avoided as much as possible in all composition: it has however a worse effect in modern languages than in ancient. To ours the ancient termination designating it, is highly advantageous. It has not only two genitives, but, let me also remark to you, it has a greater variety of sounds in it than any other I know.

JOHNSON.

Surely not than the Greek.

TOOKE.

Beyond a question; if you acknowledge that the Greeks, who have never lost their language, know how to pronounce it better than we do. Their diphthongs are almost insensibly so: we

give to their *ai* and *oi* our own deepmouthed tone, our own exclusively, as is that of *i* in *mine*, &c.

Returning to the *s*, altho we have one word of nine letters in which it occurs five times, and another of only eight in which it appears as often (*possesses* and *assesses*), yet I once from curiosity examined a hundred verses in Shakespear and the same number in Sophocles, and found it more frequent in the latter. If I had counted the *exes* and *xis*, the *zeds* and *zetas*, and the *psis*, which contain it, the difference would have been still greater. It is true, the Greek iambic contains more syllables than ours, but the number of letters is very nearly the same in each.

JOHNSON.

I am unsatisfied, after all, that the English *is*, whether joined to the word or disjoined from it, whether in full or in contraction, may not be *his*, as our grammarians have supposed.

TOOKE.

That it has not relation to *his*, may be demonstrated, by its being common to both male and female, to both singular and plural: we say not only *Edwin's book*, but *Emma's book*, and, with as little hesitation, *men's minds*.

There are some words which, if we receive them, we cannot spell rightly; they have been so perverted by custom: such are *amaze*, *alarm*, a *newt*; the first of which was a *maze*, the last an *evet*. So the French *affaire*, and the Italian *affare*; *à faire*, *a fare*; demonstrable in the latter by the earlier word, still equally in common use, *facenda*, res *facienda*. *Bower* is part of *arbour*, and *cate* is part of *delicate*.

JOHNSON.

Is *delicate* then used any where as a substantive for *delicacy*?

TOOKE.

Marston, in one of his plays, says, *princely delicates*. *Debonnaire* was formerly used in a very different sense from the present, (among the french). "Il faut être simple, obeissant et debonnaire, pour être propre à recevoir religion," says Charron, a writer not less shrewd than Bacon and much more elegant; but I have traced the old gentleman, and pretty often, out of Seneca into Plutarch.

JOHNSON.

I do not often read french: that language appears to have been greatly changed in one century.

TOOKE.

Even since Pascal, Menage, and Mad. de Sevignè. Formerly to teach greek was montrer le grec: it would be an italianism to say enseigner. This is remarkable in the french, that it is more figurative in common conversation than in ordinary prose writing, and vastly more so in prose than in verse. A batterie de cuisine, a chapeau abîmè, an artificial flower magnifique, a false curb superbe, a kidney-bean ill-boiled horrible, an old-fashioned coat affreux; a kick on the breech, or a turbot with a wrong sauce, an assassination?

We see written *mantua*-maker, for *manteau*-maker, a vulgar and ludicrous error: we see also *ameliorate* for *meliorate*, altho one would reasonably suppose that it signified the reverse. We write *posthumous*, in the silly opinion that the word is derived from *post* and *humus*: the termination in fact is nowise different from that of *maxumus* and *optumus*, in the Latin, altho, by one of the chances so common in language, it has escaped that change in the middle syllable which the others have undergone.

You would derive a good many words from the latin, which come to us from nearer relatives in the north: and there are some few which really are

latin and you do not notice as such. What think you for instance of *hocus! pocus!*

JOHNSON.

Sir, those are exclamations of conjurors, as they call themselves.

TOOKE.

Well, doctor, let us join them, and try to be conjurors ourselves a little. We know that the common people often use the aspirate unnecessarily, and as often omitt the *i*: they constantly say *ingenous* for *ingenious*: *u* and *i* are not only confounded by us, as in *grum* for *grim*, &c. but were equally so by the Romans, as *lacruma* was *lacrima*.

JOHNSON.

You mean rather with *y*.

TOOKE.

No; they oftener wrote it with *i*: the conceited and ignorant used *y*, only to shew they knew the derivation, as among us people write *thyme*, contrary to the manner of pronouncing it.

JOHNSON.

Pray go on.

TOOKE.

The preliminaries are acceded to. *Hocus* then is *ocus*, out of use, or *ocius*: *pocus* is *pocis*.

JOHNSON.

What is that?

TOOKE.

The ancient Romans, followed in this by the modern Italians, wrote *pocis* or *paucis*, *Clodius* or *Claudius*, *plodite* or *plaudite*. *Ocus pocis*, is, *quickly! at few words!* the conjuror's word of command, as *præsto* is.

JOHNSON.

You pronounced *paucis* as if the *c* was *k*.

TOOKE.

So did the Romans: we are taught so by the Greek biographers and historians. They write latin proper names according to the pronunciation; *Kikeron*, not *Siseron*; *Kaisar*, not *Sæsar*; which to their ears would have been as absurd as *Saton* would have been for *Caton*.

There are also some few inaccuracies, whereinto our most applauded speakers, and our least objectionable writers, have fallen. For instance, *I had rather not go: you had better not do it.* This error arises from ambiguity of sound ... *I'd* rather, or *I'ou'd* rather; contractions of *would*, and pronounced more like *had* *.

* I find this mode of expression in the poetry of a very distinguished scholar and critic:

If I am not mistaken, is often prefatory or parenthetical to an affirmative, in our language and most others. Nothing is absurder; for nothing is more self-evident than that a thing is this or that, *if there is no mistake*. But by saying, for instance, "If I am not *much* mistaken, sir, you are doctor Johnson;" the absurdity in the stranger would be none; for he acknowledges a *great* mistake in taking you for another, or another for you: and the same may be said of any thing else on which inquiry or curiosity has been exercised.

JOHNSON.

Sir, you mix up so much of compliment with so much of argument, that I know not how I can answer you, unless by saying that your observation on the phrase is perfectly correct, and that I believe it to be no less new.

TOOKE.

There are some peculiarities in our language which require attention, and yet have not found it. You would say *two or three times*.

"Poet who hath been building up the rhyme,
When he *had* better far *have* stretched his limbs
Beside a brook, in mossy forest dell." *Coleridge.*

And again in the prose of a celebrated nobleman:

"A poet *had better* borrow anything except money than the thoughts of another." *Note to Don Juan*, c. v. p. 218.

JOHNSON.

Why not?

TOOKE.

Because you would not say *two times;* it is anidiomatical.

JOHNSON.

Anidiomatical!

TOOKE.

We want the word; take it from me. It is not so, when *or three* comes between.

JOHNSON.

I should rather say *twice or thrice.* Certainly, as more elegant; besides, it saves a word; no inconsiderable thing, when we find a large family of young thoughts springing up about us, and calling on us for decent and warm cloathing.

You, who are fond enough of innovations in politics, are reluctant to admitt any improvement in our modes of writing. Doubtless you think it as elegant to close a member of a sentence, or the sentence itself, with *of, against, in, for,* as to write "with which to contend," "of which to speak," "against which to write," "in which to partake," "for which to be zealous."

TOOKE.

Not only as elegant, but much more so. It is strictly idiomatical; it avoids an unnecessary word;

and it is countenanced by the purest writers of Greece. The iambics of the tragedians (if that be any thing) often end with such words as επι, παρα, περι, ὑπο, ὑπερ. I would rather close a sentence thus, *there is nobody to contend with*, than, *there is nobody with whom to contend;* rather with *there is none to fight against*, than *there is none with whom to fight.* Whenever we can avoid *whom* and *which* we should; and above these the relative *that*... the stiff plantain of hard and uncultivated tracts in our literature. Even the French formerly were not shocked at closing a sentence with *avec;* altho little accordant with their language.

We often hear, *the first amongst them.*

JOHNSON.

Well, why not?

TOOKE.

Because what is *first* or *before*, is not *amongst.*

JOHNSON.

You might argue then that what is *before* is not *of*, and that it has ceased to be so when, in the nautical phrase, it has parted company: yet surely you do not object to the expression, "the first of them."

TOOKE.

It has not ceased to be *of* by being *before:* for *of* is *off*, however we may, for obvious reasons,

separate them in the parts of speech. You toss your head about, doctor: is there *fœnum in cornu?* must I make my escape? or will you accept my apology for so deep an encroachment on your time and patience?

JOHNSON.

If your arguments were always as just and innocent, I should not decline your conversation, but on the contrary should solicit from you a catalogue of such peculiarities and defects, as a profound insight into our language, and a steddy investigation of its irregularities and intricacies, have enabled you to remark.

TOOKE.

And now, doctor Johnson, you are at last in good humour with me. I hope to requite your condescension by some other remarks, more useful than those you could expect from me. Annibal Caracci, I know not whether in advice or in reproof, said to a scholar, *What you do not understand you must darken.* Are not we also of the Bologna school, my dear doctor? do not we treat men, and things in general, as Caracci would have his canvas treated? What we cannot so well manage or comprehend, we throw into a corner, into outer darkness: I do not hate, believe me, nor dislike you for your politics: whatever else they

may prove, they prove your constancy and your disinterestedness. Nor do I supplicate to you for one kind glance on me: the fixedness of your countenance, frowning as it is, shews that you at least attend to me; which, from a man of your estimation in the world, is no slight favour. Contented as I ought to be with this, I would yet entreat for others in the same condition, that you may be pleased to consider those writers whose sentiments are unpopular, as men walking away spontaneously from the inviting paths of Fortune, and as casting up the sum of an account which (we know) is never to be paid or presented.

JOHNSON.

I did not think there was so much wisdom in you.

TOOKE.

Nor was there, until this conversation, and this strong hand created it.

JOHNSON.

How! have I then really shaken hands with him, and so heartily!

The study of language has become, of late years, greatly more extensive and more profound than formerly; and it would be difficult to point out any English work, excepting certain famous Novels, remarkably defective in that particular.

I do not attempt to conjecture who is the author of them; but he is evidently a person who in his youth and early manhood was without the advantages of literary, or polished, or very decorous society. It is remarkable that the most popular works of our age, after lord Byron's, are certainly less elegant in style than any of any age whatever. I have perused no volume of them, in which there are not, at the lowest computation, twenty gross vulgarisms, or grosser violations of grammar, and in places where the character did not require nor authorize them. Sometimes a sentence holds them, like Foxis placemen, *three in a bed;* and occasionally a single and a short member of one contains a couple: for instance,

"But I *will* doubtless find some English person, *at* whom to make inquiries."

Again, a well-educated gentleman talks of "laughing *consumedly,*" and even the *Dean of Faculty* says in *Redgauntlet*, "It was as fine a first *appearance* as I ever *heard:* I should be sorry if your son did not *follow it up* in a reply." (Vol. ii. p. 45.) Follow up what? his own *first appearance!* which *appearance* was both *heard* and *followed*... by whom? by the *appearer* himself! A few words beyond, "Having thus *taken his ground* to the Dean of Faculty."

I invite the learned to shew me in any volume in any language, the same number of equally great faults within the same space.

CONVERSATION IX.

CAVALIERE PUNTOMICHINO

AND

MR. DENIS EUSEBIUS TALCRANAGH.

CAVALIERE PUNTOMICHINO

AND

MR. DENIS EUSEBIUS TALCRANAGH.

THE Cavaliere Puntomichino was the last male representative of an ancient family. He was an honest and rich man: so that, when his intention was understood at Florence of traveling to England, it excited suspicion in some, and surprise in all; for Italians of that description were never known amongst them to have crossed the Channel. He went however, and remained there several years, reading our best authors, and wondering, as he informed me, at one thing only, which is, that there could really be in the whole human race so prodigious a diversity, as he found in almost every five individuals whom he conversed with in our metropolis.

"I have often observed," said he, "more variety

in a single household, than I believe to exist in all Italy."

He never had about him the slightest taint of affectation; yet became he singular, and glaringly so, at his first introduction to the academy of La Crusca: for he asserted three paradoxes: first, that no sentence in a comedy should excede a fair page in octavo; secondly, that no witticism should be followed by an explanation, in the dialogue, of more than two pages; and thirdly, that Shakespear had nearly or quite as much humour as Goldoni. Henceforward he was a worthy man, but an oddity. His claim to the literary character I shall forbear to discuss; altho I have many papers, not indeed of his own writing, but addressed to him by others, some of which go so far as to call him a nightingale, some a great doctor, some an eagle, some a phenix, some a sun, and one both a sun and a phenix. But this last was written by a rival of him who wrote the preceding; and therefor its accuracy may be suspected, and it was declared by the academy to be more ingenious than correct.

His sedentary life had been unfriendly to his health, and he was seized in the beginning of this winter with repeated and severe attacks in the breast. As he had inherited a good property,

and had collected many rare books, nearly all the canonics and professors began to write *tributes*, *monodies*, *elegies*, *musæ plangentes*, *Etruriæ luctus*, and consolations to his heir, a very distant relative, whose brother, in the time of the French government, had been hanged for robbery at the age of eighteen, proving, as others have done in various ways, that misfortune is attendent on early elevation. He himself was in the galleys at Pisa for the murder of his father-in-law, who had educated him and had promised to leave him his estate. On the death of the cavaliere, it was foreseen that he, too late indeed for his happiness and sensibility, would be found innocent of an offence, for which the French laws in their precipitancy had condemned him. The proofs of this innocence were produced, the patron found, the sum stipulated, when the cavaliere, whose decease had been expected daily, died. On opening his will, it appeared that he had destined all his property to the maintenance of soldiers' widows, and the redemption of slaves from Barbary. *Devils!* and *cazzo!* and *cappari!* and *Bacco!* tripped up and exploded the muses and Etruria. The Pisan professor, their choregus, who, printer no less than professor and poet, had already struck off his *Lamentation*, spoke more calmly and reasonably than the rest, saying

manfully, *Gabriel, take down those sheets in papal quarto, and throw them upon the Codes of Napoleon... the thing wont do.* The expected and expecting heir was accused of falsifying the evidences; and fresh severities were added, for his attempts to corrupt justice.

Let me now revert to my first acquaintance with the cavaliere. I never in my life accepted a letter of introduction, nor ever expressed a wish, whatever I might have felt, for any man's society. By some accident this peculiarity was mentioned to Puntomichino, and he called on me immediately. Returning his visit, I found him in the library: several English books were upon the table, and there was seated at the window a young gentleman of easy manners and fashionable appearance, Mr. Denis Eusebius Talcranagh, of Castle-Talcranagh and of Skurrymore-Park, county Down, and first cousin, as he informed me, of Lord Cowslipmead, of Dove's-nest-Hall, county Meath, a great fire-eater. I bowed: on which he fancied that I had known his lordship intimately. On my confessing the contrary, he appeared at first rather mortified and surprised.

"You must however have heard something, in your earlier days, of Sir Roderic James O'Rowran, my great uncle, who, whenever he entered an inn

with his friends, placed himself at the head of the table, and cried, *Whiskey and pistols for eight!*"

It was now my turn to be mortified, and I could only reply that there were many men of merit whom it had never been my fortune to know.

"Then, sir," said he, "ten guineas to one you never were in Ireland in your life; for you must have known him if you had met him, whether you would or not."

There was an infinity of good-humour in Mr. Talcranagh; and if his ideas were not always luminous and perspicuous, they often came forth with a somewhat of prismatic brilliancy. He gave a decided preference to the writers of his own country over all others, "which," he said, "we authors are not apt to do." I then discovered that I had been conversing with a literary man, who had published an imperial folio of eleven pages on the Irish wolf-dog.

"I sold all my copies," said he, "and bought a tilbury and a leash of setters. And now, sir, if ever you should print any thing, take my advice: cuts in wood or cuts in stone, and a black-letter title-page for your life! I did it, without a knowledge of printer or publisher... to be sure, I was master of my subject, which goes a great way; and then indeed I had a pair of extraordinary capital

buckskins, which, it is true, began to carry on the surface, as Southey says of Flemish scenery,

"*a grey and willowy hue,*"

but which I found a fellow in Cockspur-street who could clean neatly; and these I sent with my best compliments to the Editor of the Quarterly Review, taking care to leave by accident a bran-new guinea in the watch-pocket. This was enough: I went no further in expenditure, altho V*** was constantly at the heels of my groom Honorius, pressing him to write a critique on the Wolfdog of Erin for the Classical Journal, since I from ignorance of custom was too proud to do it, and assuring him that, look as he might and shake his head as he would, he was no Jew, and would do the thing reasonably. Sir," added he smartly, "are you a friend to dogs?"

"A thousand thanks to you, Mr. Talcranagh," cried I, "for asking me a question which I can answer in the affirmative. There is a sort of freemasonry amongst us, I verily believe; for no dog, except a cur, a pug, or a turnspit, ever barks at me: they and children love me universally: I have more than *divinum imperium:* these form the best part of the world."

"Add the women," shouted he aloud, "and here is my hand for you." We saluted cordially.

"Indeed," said I, "Mr. Talcranagh, you have reason to be proud of your countrywomen, for their liveliness, their beauty, and their genius. The book before us, which you were looking into, abounds in eloquence, philosophy, and patriotism: there is nothing of commonplace, nothing of sickly sentiment, nothing of insane enthusiasm. I read warily; and whenever I find the writings of a lady, the first thing I do, is to cast my eyes along her pages, to see whether I am likely to be annoyed by the traps and spring-guns of interjections; and if I happen to espy them, I do not leap the paling. In these volumes I see much to admire, and nothing that goads or worries me into admiration."

"Gentlemen," said the cavaliere, "I am as warm an admirer of Lady Morgan as either of you, and if she had consulted me on a few matters and persons, I could have rendered her some service by setting her right. Travelers are profuse of praise and censure, in proportion as they have been civilly or indecorously received, not inquiring nor caring whether the account be quite correct, if the personages of whom they write be of celebrity: for censure no less than praise requires a subject of notoriety. Thousands of English and Irish court a stranger of rank in Florence, who did not

even put on mourning at the decease of his wife's brother, tho he owed to him the highest of his distinctions, and the greater part of his unwieldy fortune. He suffered to die here, imprisoned for debt, a woman once lovely, generous, and confiding, who had ruined herself to make her house appear worthy of his reception. At the moment when she was breathing her last, in silence, in solitude, in want of sustinence, his palace resounded with music, with dances, with applauses to archducal guests and their magnificent entertainer. The sum expended on that night's revelry would have released her from bondage and would have rescued her from death. Lady Morgan does not mention this: but did she not know it? She has spoken of our patriots, the Russels of our city: what were they doing? They were contented to act in the character of buffoons before him.

"One of these worthies was requested, by an intimate friend, to shew civilities toward an Englishman, supposed to be secretly, I have heard, a cultivator of what is forbidden. Now there are two such things in all well regulated states: intellect and tobacco. The latter comes more immediately under the cognisance of the prince, and is punished more summarily and expeditiously; the former is more offensive to his agents, as they

can gain nothing by detecting it, and is followed by a longer and more tortuous process of persecution and vexation. A secretary, lately a spy, omitted no opportunity of rudeness and insolence to his countryman, who had never seen or mentioned him.

" The use of diplomatic agents in Tuscany, is, to write invitations, to deliver them out when given by persons of rank, to pick the ticks off the hounds and pointers, to hold the kittens and penitentiary cats in their preparation for a life of chastity, and to count the glasses of ice at the entertainments of the minister, observing that the domestics do not present them unfairly to their favorites, nor themselves in the antechambers lick them lavishly and deeply. The secretary had received from Prince B. invitations for the English, and had distributed them to every rank and condition: the family of this gentleman was the only one omitted, on the plea that the application came too late. Deeming such an omission a marked insult to his lady, he wrote to his patriotic friend, entertaining no doubt that he would be proud to redress an affront by obtaining a ticket, capable as he was of doing it, from his intimacy with Prince B. The patriotic friend replied with great dis-

cretion and composure, that *he was sorry he could not interfere between two strangers.*

" Do you wish another anecdote of the same patriot? Go half a mile up the road to Bologna, and you will probably see before their cottage a family of thirteen, in tears. Ask them why they weep: they will inform you that this Russel, who administers and manages the estates and affairs of his father, has given them notice to quit their vineyard. Ask them, for what reason: they will reply, *we are thirteen in number; God has willed it so: some of us are too old, others too young, for work: our family has lived upon this little plot for many generations: many a kind soul, now in Paradise, has drawn water from this well for the thirsty traveler; many a one has given the fig off his bread at noon, to the woman labouring with child, and resting on that stone. We have nothing now to give! no, not even a bunch of roses to our Protectress over the gate ... mercy upon us! until this unproductive season we have always paid our rent: we are now thirty crowns in arrears. We went to the good old lady; she shook her head, and said she would do what she could for us, but that her son " managed," and he already knew the case.* On hearing this they

will tell you, as they told me, their courage forsook them, groans burst simultaneously from every breast, desperation seized the adult and vigorous, agony the aged and infirm, and the first articulate sounds they uttered, were, *O God! there is none to help us!* An Englishman of stern countenance came up at the beginning of the narration. He looked at me with defiance, and seemed to say internally, *be off.* By degrees he became more reconciled to my presence. As they continued to speak he closed his lips more strongly; the muscles of his jaw trembled more and more; he opened his eyes wider; I heard every breath of air he drew into his nostrils; he clenched his fist, stamped with his heel into the turf; cried, *what can this cursed slave do here?* and throwing down a card of address, without a thought of their incapacity to read it, *Venite da me,* in an accent rather like fury than invitation. He walked away rapidly: the wind was in his face: I saw something white blown over his shoulder at intervals till he reached the Porta San Gallo.

"There may formerly have been a virtuous or a brave citizen in the family so extolled by Lady Morgan, and indeed in what family has there not been, earlier or later? but if those who now compose it are called Russels, with equal right may

the cast horses of a sandcart be called Bucephali. Strangers are disposed to consider us as the vilest and most contemptible race in Europe; and they must appear to have reason on their side, if such creatures are taken for the best of us. Not a single one of these flaming patriots ever subscribed a farthing to aid the Spaniards or the Greeks, nor in furtherance of any agricultural or other useful association in their own country. Allowing to the Russel of the Bologna-road all his merits, I insist, for the honour of my native place, that no inhabitant of it, be his condition what it may, has fewer: I do not depress the one, nor will I suffer the other to be depressed. Patriotism has here a very different meaning from what it has in England. A patriot, with us, is a man who is unfriendly to all established government, and who, while he flatters a native prince, courts over an invader. His only grievances are, to pay taxes for the support, and to carry arms for the defence, of his country. He would loosen all the laws, as impediments to the liberty of action, with a reserve of those which secure to him the fruits of rapine and confiscation: those are provident and conservative, and enthroned in light by the philanthropy of the age. Hospitality is the virtue of barbarians..."

"Blood and *hounds!*" cried indignantly my young friend, "I would ask him, whoever he is, whether that was meant for me. If there is barbarism in a bottle of claret, there is as much of it in a corked as in an uncorked one."

"Sir," replied mildly Puntomichino, "I could shew you a Russel of the Italian school, who received unusual civilities in England, and of all those gentlemen there who treated him with attention and kindness, of all those with whom he dined constantly, not a single one, or any relative, was ever invited in his house, even to a glass of stale barleywater or sugarless lemonade."

"Cavaliere," said I, "we more willingly give invitations than accept them: I speak of others, not of myself: for I have never been tempted to dine from home these last ten years; yet, altho I am neither rich nor convivial, and hardly social, I have given at least a hundred in the time, if not superb, at least not sordid; and those who knew me long ago, say, Landor is become a miser... his father did otherwise."

"Cappari!" exclamed Puntomichino: "this whole family, with thirty thousand crowns of income, has not done a ninetieth part of it within the memory of man."

"Faith! then," interrupted Talcranagh, "it

must have come into the Russels by a forced adoption. The Russels of England are of opinion, right or wrong, that the first thing are good principles, and the next... good cheer. I wish, sir," said he, looking mildly and somewhat mournfully at me, "I had not heard you say what you did: I began to think well of you, I know not why... and I doubt not still, God forbid I should, that you are a worthy and conscientious man; but I would fain have thought well of you. As for that other, I thank him for teaching me, what I never should have learnt at home, that a fellow may be a good patriot with a very contracted heart, and as much ingratitude as he can carry to market. Why! you might trust a Correggio across his kitchen-chimney on christmas-day: ay, Signor Puntomichino?"

"Gentlemen," said our host, "under the least vindictive of princes we may talk as loudly as we please of liberty, which we could not do without fear and trembling when we were in the full enjoyment of it. What are you pondering so gravely, Mr. Talcranagh?"

"Woe!" replied he, "woe to the first family that ever dines yonder! Let them each take a bottle of *eau de Cologne*, against the explosion of mould from the grand evolution of the tablecloth.

But about your ministers there are some things not entirely to my mind, neither: your prince, I dare to say, knows nothing about them."

"Our ministers are liberal, my young friend. They have indeed betrayed in succession all the sovrans who have employed them, yet they let every man do his best or his worst: and if you are robbed or insulted, you may insult or robb again: all parties enjoy the same plenitude of power."

"Plenitude! by my soul, Sir Cavaliere, and a trifle, I think, to spare. One of them a few days ago did what a king of Great Britain and Ireland would not dare to do, and which, if the first potentate on earth had done in London, he would have been kicked down the stairs for his impudence. The exhibition of pictures at your Academy was announced as opening to the public at ten. His Excellency entered alone, and remained in the principal apartment until two, the doors of which were locked to others. If it had been possible for him to have acted so amongst us, he would have been tost in a blanket till the stars blinked upon him; the people would have perfumed his frill and ruffles abundantly with home-made essences, would have added new decorations to his waistcoat-

ful of *orders*, and would have treated his eagles with more eggs than they could swallow."

"Believe me, sirs, our government, which would be a detestable one for the English, is an excellent one for us. Every day in London brings with it what to a stranger looks like a rebellion, or at best a riot: no mischief is done thereby: your strength, which causes this irregularity, sustains you: but weak bodies bear little fermentation."

"Wisely thought and well expressed. I am convinced that if we had not a riot now and then in Ireland, we should be as mopish and sullen as the English, or as insincere and ferocious as the French. And I have observed, Signor Cavaliere, that, strange as it may appear, whenever there has been much of a riot there has been sunshine. Smile as you will, Mr. Landor, I swear to the fact."

"Your assertion, Mr. Talcranagh, is quite sufficient: but is it impossible that the fine weather may have brought together a great concourse of people to the fair or festival, and that whiskey or beauty or politics or religion may have incited them to the exertion of their prowess?"

"There are causes that we know, and there are causes that we know not. Inquiry and reflexion

are sensible things; but there is nothing like experience, nothing like seeing with one's own eyes. We must live upon the spot to judge perfectly and to collect all the evidences. Philosophy ought to lead us, but only to a certain point: there we leave her, and joy go with her. I have seen impudent rogues in Dublin, and have fancied that the world could not match them: now what think you of a set of fellows, with coats without a collar, who take us by the hand, and say with the gravest face upon earth, *The elements shall be elements no longer*, and strip them one after another of their title-deeds, as easily as Lord *Redwhiskers* stripped the ———— of ———. It is enough to make one grave to think on this abuse of intellect. Do you know, Signor Cavaliere, we have lately had people amongst us, and learned ones, who doubted the existence of the Trojan war, on which cronicles are founded."

"Sir," replied Puntomichino, "the doubt is not of recent origin. Eberard Rudolph Roth attempted in 1674 to prove from three ancient coins that Troy was not taken. What, if the Iliad should be in great measure a translation? Many of the names might lead a sceptic to suspect it: such as Agamemnon and Sarpedon, which are oriental ones with dignities prefixt; *Aga* and

Sha, which the Greeks and Romans, not possessing the shiboleth, could pronounce no otherwise. Thus they wrote *Sapor*, the same name (with the title preceding it) as *Porus*. *Aga* seems indeed to have migrated into Greece among the first Pelasgi, and designates in many things what is excellent, as in ἀγαθος, ἀγαπητος, and several proper names, as Agamedes, Agasicles, Agatharcides: but *Memnon* is not hellenic."

"Signor Cavaliere, I cannot keep up with you on your Turkish horse, which is better for any business than the road. Upon plain ground nearer us, the acutest men may be much mistaken even after long experience. I assure you, I have found grossly inaccurate the first piece of information given me by a very cautious old traveler. He mentions the honesty of the Savoyards and the thievery of the Italians: now here have I been a fortnight, safe and sound, and have not lost a hair. I had not been twentyfour hours in Savoy when they had the meanness to steal my hatband. In future I shall be persuaded how illusory are sketches of national character."

"That a traveler," said the cavaliere, "may receive a wrong opinion of events and things, after even a deep study of them, and with as much knowledge of the world as happens to most men, I

myself have a proof in my late unkle Fontebuoni. On that marriage, the best fruit of which was Peter Leopold, he was sent into France, to announce the event to the court of Versailles: and after the late revolution, when the Directory was established, he resolved to revisit the country of pleasure and politeness. He resided there one month only; long enough, he protested to me, for any man in his senses. *I have heard the same thing, unkle,* said I, *and that not only politeness is swept away, but that the women are become most indecent and wanton.*

"*Nephew Puntomichino,* he replied, *in regard to politeness what you have heard is indeed too true; but, with all my hatred and abhorrence of the present system, I am obliged in conscience to declare that the women are more correct in their morals than they were formerly. A heart is to be touched only by a diamond pin; a head is to be turned only by a peruke à la Lucrèce, worth ten louis: a compliment did formerly: if one knelt, it was uncivil not to return the condescension, by something as like it as possible.* This he said at dinner, with his tooth-pick in his fingers, wandering and flitting here and there for its quarrey, over the wold of his hard smooth gums. He was in his sixty-ninth or seventieth year when he went a second time

to Paris, and never found out that women are made continent by our ages more often and more effectually than by their own."

"Well, that never struck me," said Mr. Talcranagh.

I was here startled by some musical accents from a sofa behind me. Puntomichino cried, "What are you about, Magnelli?"

"I must go," replied he, "to the English Minister's. He is composing an opera: he has every note ready and only wants my assistence just to put them in order; which I shall have accomplished in three weeks, by going daily, and taking my dinner and supper with him!"

On this he left the room. "These musicians," said Puntomichino, "are people without ceremony. He entered, as usual, without a word, threw himself upon the sofa, sate half an hour, and the first we heard of him was the hum of a dozen notes. His observation on parting is very similar to one of my next-door neighbour, a worthy creature, and fond of chess.

"*Why so much embarasment, Signor Gozzi?*

"*It is not embarasment,* replied he calmly, *but reflexion: I can move my man in a moment... I am only thinking where I may put him.*

"*Ah! Signor Gozzi, if ministers of state would*

think about the same thing as long, they would dispose of places more wisely than they do in general."

"As for systems," said Mr. Talcranagh... "come, Signor Cavaliere, you have weighed them well; I have not patience to talk about them: conclusions are drawn even from skin and bones; eyes, noses, teeth; they will soon come (saving your presence) to..."

"I know not what they will come to," was the spirited and timely reply of the cavaliere; "but I can mention as wonderful a fact as the sunshine elicited by shilelahs. My father was a physiognomist, and when Lavater first published his work, *Now*, cried he, rubbing the palms of his hands together, *men begin to write again as they should do.* He insisted that a man's countenance, in all its changes, indicated his virtues or vices, his capacities or defects. The teeth, among other parts, were infallible indexes: they were in the human visage what consonants are in the alphabet, the great guides, the plain simple narrators. Amidst his apophthegms was, *Never trust a man with a twisted tooth.* In fact, of all I had ever seen, and of all I have ever seen since, under that description, not an individual has proved worthy of trust. I once enquired of my father, with submission, whether age or accident might not alter the in-

dications. *By no means*, exclamed he emphatically; *if the indications are changed, the character is changed: God, before he removed the mark, removed the taint.* He observed that, where the teeth turned inward, there was wariness, selfishness, avarice, inhumanity; where they turned outward, there was lasciviousness, gaming, gluttony. I then doubted these indications, and imagined that a part of the latter was taken up against a priest, not indeed in high reputation for sobriety or continence, who had offended my father in a tender quarter. My father had erected a stile for the convenience of his peasants; but the inscription was so prolix *, that he was forced to engrave

* Lest an inscription on a stile should surpass the faith of my reader, I will transcribe one literally, *on a prince changing horses at a villa*, to the intent, as it says expressly, that *all men and nations and ages* should know it.

Honori Ferdinandi III. Aust:
qui ad veterem Etruriæ dominationem redux
in hoc Capponianæ gentis prætorio
XV. Kal. Octob. MDCCCXIV
tantisper substitit,
dum rhedæ itinerariæ regalis substitueretur,
qua urbem principem inter communes plausûs
et gaudii lacrimas introiret;
herisque ob faustitatem eventûs
dignitatemque sibi locoque ab hospite magno impertitam
lætitiâ elatis

the conclusion of it upon the church-porch. The Latin, as the priest acknowledged, was very classical; but he requested that it might be removed to our dovecote, which was further off, and not by the side of any road.

" The exoteric teeth of the reverend gentleman by some unknown accident received a blow, which adjusted them between the two extremes; and my father was asked in joke, whether he had a better opinion of his spiritual guide since his improvement in dentition. *Indeed I have,* he answered gravely; *for so sudden and so great a change, whether brought about by the organic mutations of the frame, or by an irresistible stress, with which certain sentiments or sensations may bear upon it, must be accompanied by new powers, greater or smaller, and by new qualities and propensities. Some internal struggle may, in length of time, have produced an effect not only on the fibres, but also through them on the harder part of the extremities.* The favorable opinion of my father was carried to the priest; who lamented, he said, no dispensation of Providence, by which he conciliated

pristinam benevolentiam comitate alloquii
gratique animi significatione declaravit;
Marchio Petrus Robertus Capponius
ad memoriam facti postgenitis omnibus tradendam.

the better sentiments of so enlightened and charitable a man. He was soon a daily visitant at the house; he entered into the studies of his Excellency, read his observations, praised them highly, and by degrees had the courage to submitt to so experienced a master a few remarks of his own. He pursued them further: and I should blush to relate, if all Florence did not know it, that my stepmother, a young lady of twentyfour, aided him too deeply in his investigations, and confirmed my father, altho not exactly by working the problem as he would have recommended, that an internal struggle may produce an effect, not only on the fibres, but also, through them, on the harder part of the extremities. Then too became it public, that another husband had been the holy man's dentist, in consequence of too close an application to similar studies in his house."

"Why! how! what! do you talk in this tone and manner! did not you nor your father flea the devil alive? did not you spigot him nor singe him?"

"I was at school: my father took his wife to Sienna; proof enough that he resented the injury. In our country, as you know, every lady of quality has her cavaliere serviente; and you cannot pay a higher compliment to a man of rank than by call-

ing him, in polite language, a son of a whore, which, if I remember, is somewhat like an affront in England, and not even the commonest person would thank you for it. Here however it serves to distinguish the superior order from the lower, who look forward to nothing better than the liberty to stick their kneebuckles on their coats with a tag of scarlet. My father, as you may suppose, was indignant, that a priest out of the gates, neither a canonico nor a maestro di casa, should beget his children, and aspire, as he would have done by degrees, (for impudence is never retrogressive,) to conduct his lady to her carriage. I have many books in which is the text written with his own hand, *Never trust a man with a twisted tooth;* but I have searched in vain for any such sentence as, *Trust a man with an untwisted one.* His enthusiasm seems to have cooled, from the time that he found a scholar so capable of his place.

" Another of my father's maxims was, *Open a man's mouth and look whether his under-jaw be uneven, with a curvature like a swine's, which curvature is necessarily followed by the teeth, and you will infallibly find him swinish in one way or other: you will find him, take my word for it, slothful or gluttonous or selfish. I have observed*

few such who were not slothful, but never one who was not both selfish and gluttonous.

"*In the latter case, father,* said I, *it will not be necessary to open his mouth for him. I may philosophize across the table, finding there all the instruments adapted to the process of investigation.*

"*It would not demonstrate to you,* added my father, *how incorrigible is the nature of such men.*

"*Goffrido Piccoluomini was of the conformation I have described; and his parents, who themselves loved good living, and who were liberal to excess, attempted to divert at a riper age the tendency they were unable to conquer in his childhood. Many means were resorted to: all had failed. He had a cousin at Perugia, an heiress, rich, playful, and accomplished. Her beauty was irresistible. Several families were at variance in her neighbourhood, because the elder son of one had been preferred to the elder of another, this in the morning, that in the evening, and there were only two things in which they agreed; first, that she was an angel of Paradise; secondly, that she was very wrong in not fixing her choice. To quiet these animosities, her father, whose health was declining, was resolved to join his brother Guido, the father of Goffrido, at the baths of Lucca. Goffrido was*

beckoning to a boy who carried a basket of trout upon his head, when the carriage drove up to the door. He stood before it: his eye this moment on the trout, that moment on his cousin. The boy had retreated a step or two, when he caught him by the coat, and opened with the left hand the coach-door. He had not seen Leopoldina since she was a chubby ruddy child. There are blossoms in field and garden, which first are pink, and which whiten as they expand. Leopoldina was one of these. Her face alone had retained its plumpness: she was rather pale and slender. At sight of Goffrido, who still held the boy's skirt, she not merely smiled but laughed; she would however have put her hand before her face, for she had been educated by a French lady of high rank, when she recollected that she must give it to her cousin, who held out his. Never had he felt the force of admiration to such a degree: his mouth was open: his teeth, white as ivory, but unlucky in their curvature, looked like a broken portcullis which would not come down. He actually loosed the fisher-boy's coat, and almost had forgot, in the midst of his compliment, to desire he would go into the house, which he did, the first of the party.

"*I am incapable of giving such descriptions as*

would suit a novel or romance, and must therefor do injustice to the young people. Goffrido was really a fine young man, blooming in health, and addicted to no pleasures but those of the table, which he thought the most solid of all, and took especial care should not be the least durable. These however by degrees he abandoned for more visionary and exalted. He failed in no kind of attention to his fair cousin, and, when her appetite seemed to flag a little, looked out for whatever was choicest at table, presented it to her with grace and disinterestedness, and pressed it on her attention with recommendations the most anxious and with solicitude the most pathetic. The spring had passed away, long as it lingers in this delightful region, when some moral reflexions, I know not from which first, induced the fathers to devise an union. Never were two children more obedient. If my father wishes it, his will is mine, *said Goffredo.* Dear sir, you have instructed me in my duty: dispose of your Leopoldina, *was the answer of his cousin. They agreed to remain together at the baths until the vintage, at which time they must be at Perugia, and the ceremony should be performed. It rarely happened now that either had a bad appetite; and if either had, the other did not observe it. Jokes flew about in*

a contrary direction: security had taken place of solicitude, and tenderness had made room for good-humour. It rarely happens that the more delicate fruits are conveyed in perfection up these mountains: they are generally bruized and broken. Goffrido, observing this, and corroborated in his observation by Leopoldina, rode manfully to Pescia, bought a basketful of the most lovely peaches there, rolled up each separately in several fig-leaves, and returned for dinner. Surely some evil Genius watches the Anti-Vestal fire of our concupiscent propensities, and renders it inextinguishable. Goffrido presented the peaches to Leopoldina. She took, whether by choice or accident, the finest. Her lover, seeing it on her plate, fixed his heart upon it, and saying You have taken a bruized one, *transferred it to his, and gave her two others. His mother said, laughingly,* Goffrido, I see no bruize; let me look. *He blushed deeply; he lost his presence of mind, he could not support the glance of surprise which his change of countenance alone had excited in his cousin, nor the idea of yielding to so light a temptation.. in short, he left the room. The old people sate silent. Leopoldina was afflicted, for she loved him. She retired too, soon after; and, being alone, began to revolve in her memory her whole acquaintance*

with him; and this revolving of hers cast up many similar things against him. Finally her thoughts wandered as far as Perugia, and dwelt for a moment, in the chain of ideas, on a little boy who, a few years before, had fought a battle with another for having taken a pear from her and bitten it before she could catch him. She remembered that, when she would have taken it back and eaten it, her champion cried No, Signora Leopoldina, the thief has bitten it. I will bring you another instead! *Poor Antonino! sighed she, what made me think of thee again!*

" *He had not been one of her lovers: how could he have been? he was the son of the parish-priest, and what is more scandalous, the acknowledged son. The father was reproved by his bishop, and threatened with suspension unless he denied it publicly.* My lord, *answered the priest,* my passions on this one occasion overcame my reason! The mother of the child, cruelly treated by her family for my transgression, sank under the double weight of shame and sorrow. *Take my poor infant,* cried she; *teach him, O unhappy man, to love God.. as well as I thought I did!* and she expired in my arms. I have educated the child to virtue; the best reparation of my fault: falsehood, my lord, would be none.

"*Leopoldina, on her return to Perugia, walked often on the field of battle.. a far more important one, not only to her but to us, if I may judge by the interest I experience and seem by your attention to have excited, than that other in the vicinity, where Hannibal beat the Romans. Antonino, she thought, avoided her. She had sometimes seen him, and fancied that he had seen her. At last she was certain he had; for while she was talking with an old woman, she perceived the old woman's eyes to wander from her toward the parsonage, and heard a window-blind close. She turned round.* Another time will do, *said the old woman.* I must say he had patience enough. He has little to give me; but he brings it me himself when I cannot walk, or when it rains, and comforts me as much by smiling and laughing as another could do by praying.

"*I should like to look a little at Leopoldina's teeth,* said my father, *for she is a most singular girl. Would you believe it? she is grown at last as decisive as any of her neighbours, young or old, could desire. She has declined the visits of them all as lovers, and has declared to her parents that if she ever marries it shall be Antonino.*"

I have reported this Conversation in a manner

differing from the rest. If illustrious characters have been invited to my entertainment,

Locus est et pluribus umbris.

The meaner of us have spoken but seldom, and indeed I have suppressed the greater part of my own remarks, and several of Mr. Talcranagh's. A conversation with a young Irishman of good natural abilities, and among no race of men are those abilities more general, is like a forest-walk; in which, while you are delighted with the healthy fresh air, and the green unbroken turf, you must stop at every twentieth step to extricate yourself from a briar. You acknowledge that you have been amused, but that you rest willingly, and that you would rather not take the same walk on the morrow.

CONVERSATION X.

NDREW HOFFER, COUNT METTERNICH,

AND

THE EMPEROR FRANCIS.

ANDREW HOFFER,

COUNT METTERNICH,

AND

THE EMPEROR FRANCIS.

METTERNICH.

WHO are you, man? I hear you have brought some intelligence from the Tyrol. Be brief; I have little time for audiences, and am surprised that you should have required one, altho you mountaineers are somewhat used to liberties. What, in few words, have you brought from your country?

HOFFER.

This.

METTERNICH.

No enigmas: at the court of Vienna we understand no other than plain language.

HOFFER.

Your Excellency commanded me to be brief: I was so. This is the heron's feather which moved merrily over the Alps, when not an eagle's was

stirring. If the slaughter of thirty thousand enemies is worth a recompense, I come, at the instigation of those who followed me, to ask one.

METTERNICH.

I expected it: never was an audience asked of me, or of any other minister, which did not begin or end so. But, friend, many years of war have exhausted the treasury; England is penurious: and we have innumerable young men, of high rank and great promise, disappointed in their hopes of preferment: besides, who ordered you to take up arms?

HOFFER.

My oath of allegiance, the voice of my country, my hatred of the French, and my contempt of the Italians, by whom principally our towns and villages were garrisoned.

METTERNICH.

You would fain be another William Tell.

HOFFER.

As willingly as William Tell, now among the saints in heaven, would, if he were living, be another Andrew Hoffer. We are creatures too humble for jealousy; we have neither rank nor beauty, neither silk breeches nor powdered wig; we write no poems, challenge no club for attention, and solicit no clerk for preferment.

METTERNICH.

I have read your name in the French gazettes, and you have just now mentioned it, I think, but really I quite forget what it may be.

HOFFER.

Andrew Hoffer.

METTERNICH.

Such is the tenderness of the emperor my master for those who have served him faithfully, that, altho you are no longer his subject, still, as you are a person of known bravery, and of some repute in your neighbourhood, if you will only change your name and enter into the service as an Austrian, I myself will venture to mention you as worthy of the earliest promotion, and, within three or four years at furthest, I entertain the best founded hopes that you may be made a corporal.

HOFFER.

Excellent sir, I do not ask so much.

METTERNICH.

A little money, if I could dispose of it, should not be wanting...but...

HOFFER.

Pardon me, sir, an interruption to the current of your kindness. I have grain and wine, under a certain rock I could mention, with two hundred

crowns, and my freehold may be valued at twelve hundred more, and I have children who are brave and healthy, who love their father and fear God.

METTERNICH.

You want something, and it is neither money nor promotion. I believe I am as acute as most people, yet here I confess my dulness.

HOFFER.

If I have devoted my little property, which is always dearer to the possessor than a great one, as every shrub and hillock is familiar to him, and the scene of some joviality, some tenderness, or some kindness; if I have hazarded and exposed my life in all places and seasons, for him whom we both are serving, grant me only a cell or a dungeon in this city. I have a country to defend, I have a family to educate, I have duties to teach and to perform; and your Excellency knows that the French police has traced me into the Austrian states, and has demanded that I should be delivered up. Never shall this happen. I could not preserve the dominions of my master, but I will preserve his honour. Little did I ever dream of prisons: to us Tyrolese they are horrible as hell, and like hell the abodes of crime only; but he whom I have sworn to obey must do nothing unworthy of his name and station. Rather would I

waste away my strength in this dreary asylum; rather would I live among the unholy and unjust; rather would I, if such be God's ordinance, lose the blossoming of my brave lads at home, which is worth a thousand times more, not only than all the future, but than all the past of life. There are those about them who will tell them of me, and there are places to take them into, on the cliffs and in the vallies, in many a copse and craggy lane, where my name, summer or winter, will sound in their ears right well.

METTERNICH.

Mr. Hoffer, I cannot enter into these discussions. It appears by your own acknowledgement that there will be little loss on either side. Your children will be taken care of, you say, whatever may happen, and a trifle at most can be the damage to your affairs. What then do you miss?

HOFFER.

The sight of my native hills, my homestead, my gardenplot of sweet herbs, the young appletrees in my croft, the friends of my youth, the companions of my dangers, and the associates of many a freak and frolic, requiring no less enterprise. I lose above all...but alas! what are the children of the great to them! You stared at me, sir count, when I spoke to you of mine. One

would imagine that *family* meant coaches, horses, grooms, liveries, and gravy-spoons: one would imagine there were some indecency in the word *child*. Believe me, sir, they are different things with us from what they are with you. If you happen to cherish them, it is that they may carry a lily, a lion, a bear, a serpent, a bird, when you have done with it. I love in them, yes, beyond my own soul, God forgive me! the very worst things about them; their unparriable questions, triumphant screams, and boisterous embraces. It is true, I never talked of them before so; but they are now beyond hale or whistle far enough.

METTERNICH.

I shall be happy to expedite the business of your petition, from which it appears to me, my friend, you have somewhat deviated, forgetting the exact place and circumstances where you are.

HOFFER.

Excuse me, sir, once more: I acknowledge my error: I have been discoursing as if all the cloth in the world were of one colour and one fineness, and as if a man who goes upon two legs were equal to one who goes upon eight or sixteen, with a varnished plank betwixt, and another man's rear at his nostrils.

METTERNICH.

e brute! Others may have the same pre-
ns as you, and it would be difficult to pro-
l we would favour.

HOFFER.

and alone in this proscription. Pretensions
e none: my country has used me as she
a trumpet: I was in her hands what she
d me to be, and what she made me. Whe-
ıer brave hearts followed me or followed this
r, what matters it? I am not better than
of them who are with God: had I been so,
ıuld have called me among the first. Those
ıre yet living wish to reserve me for another
if another, such as brave men pant for, is
ed us.

FRANCIS (*entering*).

still: who is that man, count, stroaking his
s feather with his fore-finger?

METTERNICH.

is the Andrew...Hoffer...I think it is written.

FRANCIS.

vish we were fairly rid of him.

HOFFER.

, your countenance did not inspire me in the
ıning with much confidence. When you en-

tered, I observed, that you dared not meet an honest man's eye.

METTERNICH.

Audacious! do you know...

FRANCIS.

We may draw something from him: let him go on. Are we safe, Metternich? He is a strong rogue: I dont like his looks.

HOFFER.

It becomes not me to be angry with any one; but until I asked a favour from you, it would have been well in you to leave his Excellency to his own kind intentions. The little good that drips from the higher sources, is intercepted or corrupted by secretaries, clerks, valets, and other such people as you.

FRANCIS.

What does he want?

METTERNICH.

A place in prison.

FRANCIS.

Give him it.

HOFFER.

I thank you, friend. If you are idle, as you seem to be, pray shew me the way: come along: we are losing time.

FRANCIS.

Make out the order: send him off.

HOFFER.

The gentleman is gone then! He gave his advice very fluently, almost as if he directed. When I would have embraced him for his readiness to serve me, his breath drove me back. O for a fresh pipe of tobacco! a bundle of sweet hay! a sprig of thyme! a bean-flower. Other creatures have each his own peculiar ill savour, and that suffices for the whole of him; but men, and in particular those of cities, have beds and parterres and plots and knots of stinks, varying in quality from the dells and dingles to the mountain-top. There are people who stink heart and soul: their bodies are the best of them. Away with these fellows! I would not be a materialist if I could help it; I was educated in no such bestiality: but is it possible that God should ever have intended such spirits as these to be immortal?

METTERNICH.

Friend, it is not permitted in any public office to excede the business to be transacted there. I will venture to pronounce that yours is the first reflexion ever made in one; and it affords no proof of your delicacy or discretion. If you wish

protection, never hazard a remark of any kind, unless you intend it for publication: in that case the censor will judge of its propriety, and it may do you no harm. Write freely; write every thing you please: high souls are privileged at Vienna.

Soldier, take this note to the governor, as directed: you may accompany him, Mr. Hoffer.

HOFFER.

To the governor! Do favour me, sir, with a prison.

METTERNICH.

I do so.

HOFFER.

But without sending me to his excellency the governor of the city.

METTERNICH.

My note is addressed to the governor of the prison.

HOFFER.

What! are jailers called governors?

METTERNICH.

God's blood! the fellow asks questions: he examines ranks and dignities. Fare you well, Mr. Hoffer: God preserve you, in reward of your zeal and fidelity.

FRANCIS (*returning*).

Is he gone?

METTERNICH.

This instant, sire.

FRANCIS.

The French minister is very urgent in the business: what is to be done?

METTERNICH.

I am afraid he must be surrendered.

FRANCIS.

The empress says that all Europe would cry out against it, as an action the most ungenerous and ungrateful: such are her words.

METTERNICH.

With your Majesty's permission, I not only would oppose to them the opinion of all the archdukes and of the whole aulic council, but could also prove the contrary by plain and irrefragable arguments. Ungenerous it cannot be, because he desired no reward, and none was in question. Ungrateful it cannot be; for kings and emperors are exempt by the nature of things from that odious vice. It is the duty of all subjects to do their utmost for the advantage of the prince: nothing is owing to them for an act of duty: duty is the payer, not the receiver. Whatever is accorded by a sovran to his vassal is granted by special favour; a signification of being pleased, a testimonial of being served, a patent to the person

thus gratified that he is at full liberty to serve and please again. There can be gratitude only where there are obligations and duties; and to suppose any in reciprocity between prince and people, is rank jacobinism.

FRANCIS.

Insurgents talk always of their country; a term which I would willingly never hear at all, and which no good subject ever utters in the first place. *Emperor and country, king and country,* we may bear; but hardly; altho I have been assured that such phrases are uttered by many well-meaning men: but who ever heard of *country and emperor, country and king?* The times are bad enough; still the subversion of right principles is not yet universal and complete.

METTERNICH.

What orders then would your Majesty give, relating to this Andrew Hoffer?

FRANCIS.

He appears an irreverent, rash, hot-headed man: he could however be kept in order, as I said yesterday, by entering into one of my Austrian regiments, by going into Transylvania, or by lying a few years in the debtors' prison; and perhaps the French government, after a time, would be satisfied with the arrangement. To deliver him up

is, after all, the more conformable to the desires of Bonaparte; and he can do me more injury than Hoffer can do me good.

METTERNICH.

Your Majesty has contemplated the matter in its true political point of view, and is persuaded that those few diamonds, of which I informed your Majesty as usual, have no influence on my sentiments. I would not even offer my opinion; but hearing your Majesty's, it is my duty to see that your imperial will and pleasure be duly executed *.

* No crime of despotism, however enormous, is without a parallel. When we fancy we have reached that point of congelation above which it is impossible to breathe, we see another such hanging with all its horrours over our heads.

The intelligent and virtuous Giannone, one century ago, edited his elaborate and faithful History of Naples. The usurpations and frauds of popery were exposed in it: inquisitors and assassins were employed against him; and he was forced to abandon his profession of advocate, to leave his family, his friends, his means of subsistence, and to seek protection, where Hoffer sought it, in Vienna. The friendship of Prince Eugene could not defend him against the malice of the Pope, working on the pusillanimity of the Emperor. He was driven from Austria, and took refuge in Venice: here also was an inquisition. Giannone was seized by night, and cast before sunrise on the papal shores. He found the means however of escaping to Geneva. After a residence of several

months in that city, he was invited by an emissary of the Sardinian king to a villa on the opposite side of the lake, where he was arrested by the contrivance of this wretch, who had formed an acquaintance with him on purpose. For vindicating, as he had done, the privileges of the house of Savoy against the pretensions of the Pope, his reward from the jailer of the Alps was a strict confinement, first in a fort of Savoy, afterward in the Citadel of Turin, where, *after twelve years close imprisonment*, he died.

CONVERSATION XI.

DAVID HUME

AND

JOHN HOME.

DAVID HUME

AND

JOHN HOME.

HUME.

We Scotchmen, sir, are somewhat proud of our families and relationships: this is however a nationality which perhaps I should not have detected in myself, if I had not been favoured with the flattering present of your tragedy. Our names, as often happens, are spelt differently; but I yielded with no reluctance to the persuasion, that we are, and not very distantly, of the same stock.

HOME.

I hope, sir, our mountains will detain you amongst them some time, and I presume to promise you that you will find in Edinburgh a society as polished and literate as in Paris.

HUME.

As literate I can easily believe, my cousin, and

perhaps as polished, if you reason upon the ingredients of polish: but there is certainly much more amenity and urbanity at Paris than anywhere else in the world, and people there are less likely to give and take offence. All topics may be discussed without arrogance and superciliousness: an atheist would see you worship a stool, or light a candle at noon, without a sneer at you; and a bishop, if you were well-drest and perfumed, would argue with you calmly and serenely, tho you doubted the whole Athanasian creed.

HOME.

So much the worse: God forbid we should ever experience this lukewarmness in Scotland.

HUME.

God, it appears, has forbidden it: for which reason, to shew my obedience and submission, I live as much as possible in France, where at present God has forbidden no such thing.

HOME.

Religion, my dear sir, can alone make men happy and keep them so.

HUME.

Nothing is better calculated to make men happy than religion, if you will allow them to manage it according to their minds; in which case the strong

men hunt down others, until they can fold them, entrapp them, or noose them. Here however let the discussion terminate. Both of us have been in a cherry orchard, and have observed the advantages of the jacket, hat, and rattle.

HOME.

Our reformed religion does not authorize any line of conduct diverging from right reason: we are commanded by it to speak the truth to all men.

HUME.

Are you also commanded to hear it from all men?

HOME.

Yes, let it only be proved to be truth.

HUME.

I doubt the fact: on the contrary, you will not even let it be proved: you resist the attempt: you blockade the preliminaries. Religion, as you practise it in Scotland, in some cases is opposite to reason and subversive of happiness.

HOME.

In what instance?

HUME.

If you had a brother whose wife was unfaithful to him, without his suspicion, if he lived with her happily, if he had children by her, if others of

which he was fond could be proved by you, and you only, not to be his, what would you do?

HOME.

O the strumpet! we have none such here, excepting the wife indeed (as we hear she is) of a little lame blear-eyed lieutenant, brought with him from Sicily, and bearing a *wee* Etna of her own about her, and truly no quiescent or intermittent one, which Mungo Murray (the apprentice of Hector Abercrombie) tells me *has boiled* over upon half the young dissolutes in the parish. Of the married men who visited her, there was never one whose boot did not pinch him soon after, or the weather was no weather for corns and rheumatisms. I run into this discourse, not fearing that another philosopher will, like Empedocles, precipitate himself into the crater, but merely to warn you against the husband, whose intrepidity on entering the houses of strangers has caught many acute and wary folks. After the first compliments, he will lament to you that elegant and solid literature is more neglected in our days than it ever was; he will intreat you to recommend him to your bookseller.. his own, having been too much enriched by him, had grown insolent.. it is desirable that it should be one who could advance three or four guineas.. not that he cares

about the money, but that it is always best to have a check upon these people. You smile.. he has probably joined you in the street already, and found his way into your study, and requested of you *by the bye* a trifling loan, as being the only person in the world with whom he could take such a liberty.

HUME.

You seem to forget that I am but just arrived, and never knew him.

HOME.

That is no impediment: on the contrary, it is a reason the more. A new face is as inviting to him as to the mosquitos in America. If you lend him a guinea, to be rid of him, he will declare the next day that he borrowed it at your own request, and that he returned it the same evening.

HUME.

Such men perhaps may have their reasons for being here; but the woman must be, as people say, like a fish out of water.

HOME.

In some of her movements, no doubt.

HUME.

But again to the question. Come now, if you had a brother, as I was saying, whose wife...

HOME.

Out upon her! should my brother cohabit with her? should my nephews be defrauded of their patrimony by bastards?

HUME.

You would then destroy his happiness, and his children's: for, supposing that you preserved to them a scanty portion more of fortune (which you could not do), still the shame they would feel from their mother's infamy would much outweigh it.

HOME.

I do not see clearly that this is a question of religion.

HUME.

All the momentous actions of religious men are referable to their religion, more or less nearly; all the social duties, and surely these are implicated here, are connected with it.

Suppose again that you knew a brother and sister, who, born in different countries, met at last, ignorant of their affinity, and married.

HOME.

Poor blind sinful creatures! God be merciful to them!

HUME.

I join you heartily in the prayer, and would

only add to it, man be merciful to them also! Imagine them to have lived together ten years, to have a numerous and happy family, to come and reside in your parish, and the attestation of their prior relationship to be made indubitable to you, by some document which alone could establish and record it: what would you do?

HOME.

I would snapp asunder the chain that the devil had ensnared them in, even if he stood before me; I would implore God to pardon them, and to survey with an eye of mercy their unoffending bairns.

HUME.

And would not you also be disposed to behold them with an eye of the same materials?

HOME.

Could I leave them in mortal sin? a prey to the ensnarer of souls! No; I would rush between them, as with a flaming sword; I would rescue them by God's help from perdition.

HUME.

What misery and consternation would this rescue bring with it!

HOME.

They would call upon the hills to cover them, to crush and extinguish their shame.

HUME.

Those who had lived together in love and innocence and felicity! A word spoken to them by their pastor brings them into irremediable guilt and anguish. And you would do this?

HOME.

The laws of God are above all other laws: his ways are inscrutable: thick darkness covers his throne.

HUME.

My cousin, you who have written so elegant and pathetic a tragedy, cannot but have redd the best contrived one in existence, the Edipus of Sophocles.

HOME.

It has wrung my heart, and has deluged my eyes.

HUME.

Which would you rather do; cause and excite those sufferings, or assuage and quell them?

HOME.

Am I a Scotchman or an islander of the Red-sea, that a question like this should be asked me?

HUME.

You would not then have given to Edipus that information which drove him and Jocasta to despair.

HOME.

To him no: but as a christian and a minister of the gospel, I am commanded to defy the devil, and to burst asunder the bonds of sin.

HUME.

I am certain you would be greatly pained in doing it.

HOME.

I should never overcome the grief and anxiety so severe a duty would cause me.

HUME.

You have now proved, better than I could have done in twenty *Essays*, that, if morality is not religion, neither is religion morality. Either of them, to be good, (and the one must be and the other should be so) will produce good effects from the beginning to the end, and be followed by no remorse or repentance.

It would be presumptuous in me to quote the bible to you, who are so much more conversant in it: yet I cannot refrain from repeating, for my own satisfaction, the beautiful sentence on Holiness; that "all her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." It says, not one or two paths, but *all:* for vice hath one or two passably pleasant in the season, if we could forget that, when we

would return, the road is difficult to find, and must be picked out in the dark. Imagine any thing in the semblance of a duty, attended by regret and sorrow, and be assured that Holiness has no concern in it. Admonition, it is true, is sometimes of such a nature, from that of the irregularity it would correct, as to occasion a sigh or a blush to him who gives it: in this case, the sensation so manifested adds weight to the reproof and indemnifies the reprover. He is happy to have done, what from generosity and tenderness of heart, he was sorry and slow to do; and the person in whose behalf he acted, must be degraded beneath the dignity of manhood, if he feels less for himself than another has felt for him. The regret is not at the performance of his duty, but at the failure of its effect.

To produce as much happiness as we can, and to prevent as much misery, is the proper aim and end of all true morality and all true religion.

Only give things their right direction: there is room; do but place and train them well.

HOME.

What! room for vice and wickedness?

HUME.

There was a time when what is wine was not

wine, when what is vinegar was not vinegar, when what is corruption was not corruption. That which would turn into vice, may not only not turn into it, but may, by discreet and attentive management, become the groundwork of virtue. A little watchfulness over ourselves will save us a great deal of watchfulness over others, and will permitt the kindliest of religions to dropp her inconvenient and unseemly talk, of enmity and strife, cuirasses and breastplates, battles and exterminations.

HOME.

These carnal terms are frequent in the books of the Old Testament.

HUME.

Because the books of the Old Testament were written when the world was much more barbarous and ferocious than it is at present; and all legislators must accommodate their language to the customs and manners of the country.

HOME.

Apparently you would rather abolish the strong language and forcible expressions of our pious reformers, than the abominations at which their souls revolted. I am afraid you would hesitate as little to demolish kirks, as convents, to drive out ministers, as monks.

HUME.

I would let ministers and their kirks alone. I would abolish monasteries; but gradually and humanely; and not until I had discovered how and where the studious and pious could spend their time better. I hold religion in the light of a medal, which has contracted rust from ages. This rust seems to have been its preserver for many centuries, but after some few more will certainly be its consumer, and leave no vestige of effigy or superscription behind: it should be detached carefully and patiently, not ignorantly and rudely scoured off. Happiness may be taken away from many with the design of communicating it to more: but that which is a grateful and refreshing odour in a limited space, would be none whatever in a larger; that which is comfortable warmth to the domestic circle, would not awaken the chirping of a cricket, or stimulate the flight of a butterfly, in the forest; that which satisfies a hundred poor monks, would, if thrown open to society at large, contribute not an atom to its benefit and emolument. Placid tempers, regulated habitudes, consolatory visitations, are suppress and destroyed, and nothing rises from their ruins. Better let the cell be standing, than level it only for the thorn and nettle.

HOME.

What good do these idlers, with their cords and wallets, or, if you please, with their regularities?

HUME.

These have their value, at least to the possessor and the few about him. Ask rather, what is the worth of his abode to the prince or to the public? who is the wiser for his cowl, the warmer for his frock, the more contented for his cloister, when they are taken from him? Monks, it is true, are only as stars that shine upon the desert: but tell me, I beseech you, who caused such a desert in the moral world, and who rendered so faint a light, in some of its periods, a blessing? Ignorant rulers, must be the answer, and inhuman laws. These should cease to exist some time before their antidotes, however ill-compounded, are cast away.

If we had lived seven or eight centuries ago, John Home would probably have been saying mass at the altar, and David Hume, fatter and lazier, would have been pursuing his theological studies in the convent. We are so much the creatures of times and seasons, so modified and fashioned by them, that the very plants upon the wall, if they were as sensible as some suppose them to be, would laugh at us.

HOME.

Fantastic forms and ceremonies are rather what the true philosopher will reprehend. Stripp away these, reduce things to their primitive state of purity and holiness, and nothing can alter or shake us, clinging, as we should do, to nothing but the anchor of Faith.

HUME.

People clung to it long ago; but many lost their grasp, benumbed by holding too tight. The church of Scotland brings close together the objects of veneration and abhorrence. The evil principle, or devil, was, in my opinion, hardly worth the expense of his voyage from Persia; but, since you have him, you seem resolved to treat him nobly, hating him, defying him, and fearing him nevertheless. I would not however place him so very near the Creator, let his pretensions, from custom and precedent, be what they may.

HOME.

He is always marring the fair works of our heavenly Father: in this labour is his only proximity.

HUME.

You represent him as spurring men on to wickedness, from no other motive than the pleasure he experiences in rendering them miserable.

HOME.

He has no other, excepting his inveterate spite and malice against God; from which indeed, to speak more properly, this desire originates.

HUME.

Has he lost his wits, as well as his station, that he fancies he can render God unhappy, by being spiteful and malicious? You wrong him greatly; but you wrong God more: for in all Satan's attempts to seduce men into wickedness, he leaves every one his free-will and liberty, either to resist or yield; but the heavenly Father, as you would represent him, predestines the greater part of mankind to everlasting pains and torments, antecedently to corruption or temptation. There is no impiety in asking you which is the worst: for impiety most certainly does not consist in setting men right, on what is demonstrable in their religion, nor in shewing them that God is greater and better, than, with all their zeal for him, they have ever thought him.

HOME.

This is to confound religion with philosophy, the source of every evil, and of every error.

HUME.

Religion is the elder sister of philosophy: on whatever subjects they may differ, it is unbecoming

in either to quarrel, and most of all so about their inheritance.

HOME.

And have you nothing, sir, to say against the pomps and vanities of other worships, that you should assail the institutions of your native country? To fear God, I must suppose then, is less meritorious, than to build steeples, and embroider surplices, and compose chaunts, and blow the bellows of organs.

HUME.

My dear sir, it is not that God is delighted with hymns and instruments of music, or that he prefers base to tenor or tenor to base, or Handel to Giles Halloway, that nations throng to celebrate in their churches his power and his beneficence: it is not that Inigo Jones, or Christopher Wren, could erect to him an habitation more worthy of his presence, than the humblest cottage or the loneliest moor: it is that the best feelings, the highest faculties, the greatest wealth, should be displayed and exercised in the patrimonial palace of every family united... for such are churches both to the rich and poor.

HOME.

Your hand, David! Pardon me, sir; the sentiment carried me beyond custom; for it recalled

to me the moments of blissful enthusiasm when I was writing my tragedy, and charmed me the more as coming from you.

HUME.

I explain the causes of things, and leave them.

HOME.

Go on, sir, pray go on; for here we can walk together. Suppose that God never heard us, never cared for us: do those hear you, whose exploits you celebrate at public dinners, our Wallaces and Bruces? Yet are not we the braver, the more generous, the more grateful?

HUME.

I do not see clearly how the more grateful: but I would not analyse by reducing to a cinder a lofty sentiment.

HOME.

Every act of Gratitude is rewarded by reproduction. Justice is often pale and melancholy; but Gratitude, her daughter, is constantly in the flow of spirits and the bloom of loveliness. You call out to her when you fancy she is passing; you want her for your dependents, your domestics, your friends, your children. The ancients, as you know, habitually asked their gods and goddesses, by which of their names it was most agreeable to them to be invoked: now let Gratitude be, what

for the play of our fancy, we have just imagined her, a sensible living power; I cannot think of any name more likely to be pleasing to her, than Religion. The simplest breast often holds more reason in it than it knows of, and more than Philosophy looks for or suspects. We almost as frequently despise what is not despicable as we admire and reverence what is. No nation in the world was ever so enlightened, and in all parts and qualities so civilized, as the Scotch. Why would you shake or unsettle or disturb those principles, which have rendered us peaceable and contented?

HUME.

I would not by any means.

HOME.

Many of your writings have evidently such a tendency.

HUME.

Those of my writings to which you referr will be read by no nation: a few speculative men will take them; but none will be rendered more gloomy, more dissatisfied, or more unsocial by them. Rarely will you find one who, five minutes together, can fix his mind even on the surface: some new tune, some idle project, some light thought, some impracticable wish, will gene-

rally run, like the dazzling haze of summer on the dry heath, betwixt them and the reader. A bagpipe will swallow them up, a strathspey will dissipate them, or Romance with the death-rattle in her throat will drive them away into dark staircases and charnelhouses.

You and I, in the course of our conversation, have been at variance, as much as discreet and honest men ought to be: each knows that the other thinks differently from him, yet each esteems the other. I cannot but smile when I reflect that a few paces, a glass of wine, a cup of tea, conciliate those whom Wisdom would keep asunder.

HOME.

No wonder you scoff emphatically, as you pronounce the word *wisdom*.

HUME.

If men would permitt their minds, like their children, to associate freely together, if they could agree to meet one another with smiles and frankness, instead of suspicion and defiance, the common stock of wisdom and of happiness would be centupled. Probably those very two men who hate each other most, and whose best husbandry is to sow burs and thistles in each other's path, would, if they had ever met and conversed fami-

liarly, have been ardent and inseparable friends. The minister who may order my book to be burnt tomorrow by the hangman, if I, by any accident, had been seated yesterday by his side at dinner, might perhaps in another fortnight recommend me to his master, for a man of such gravity and wisdom as to be worthy of being a privy counsellor, and might conduct me to the treasury bench.

CONVERSATION XII.

PRINCE MAUROCORDATO

AND

GENERAL COLOCOTRONI.

PRINCE MAUROCORDATO

AND

GENERAL COLOCOTRONI.

MAUROCORDATO.

Pope Clement the ninth died of grief at being unable to succour the island of Crete. It is true, the Venetians, who were expelled from it, were of his church: we are separated from it only by a syllable. Is there neither pope nor king who can step over a syllable in our defence? Systematically have we been persecuted, and as irregularly have we been abandoned; and I know not which despot is most deserving of our abhorrence and execration, whether he whose intolerable chains we have wrenched and cast away from us, or the colder barbarian, the most forward to promise, and the most able to afford us, succour. Superseding this, let us present a picture to our country, drawn from one rather nearer, and worthy to

be placed on the next pannel to that which represents the heroic Hofer, the last and truest defender of Austria, delivered up by her to his murderers.

Rhigas, we know, was born at Velestinos in Thessaly, about the year 1753. He was the primary mover in our glorious cause, since the power of the Venetians was broken by the common enemy. Enriched by commerce, he left it early, and collecting about him the few literary men * whom our unfortunate nation at that time produced, went to Vienna and edited a journal. His inoffensive manners, his charity, his liberality, conciliated the hearts of all. The government felt and acknowledged the utility of his labours: its new subjects were better disposed toward it, and others were more ready to become so. Above all, the Servians, then under Paswan Oglou, read with avidity the evangile of their freedom. The divan of Constantinople was informed of it: a demand was made that Rhigas be delivered up, and was at once acceded to. He and eight of his friends were seized by the police of Vienna,

* Zabira, a Greek of Sialista, is reported to have left behind him a catalogue and biography of the Greek writers since the capture of Constantinople: he died in the year 1804.

chained, thrown into a boat on the Danube, and committed to a Turkish guard.

In vain was the torture inflicted on them, to extort the names of their accomplices.

At the sight of Widdin, "O strong and beauteous city!" cried the patriot Rhigas, "residence of a wise and valiant prince! never hast thou seen him abandoning his defenders, nor intimidated by an enemy, far or near."

The animated tone, the look of exultation in Rhigas, was the signal of death to his countrymen and him. Apprehensive that it denoted the proximity of a rescue, the captain of the guard ordered the larger stones in the ballast to be fastened about their necks. During this operation they sang the hymn to Liberty which Rhigas composed, and when they had begun the louder chorus, were precipitated into the river.

COLOCOTRONI.

O Rhigas! who among the martyrs sits nearer to thy God than thou? Hear me! look down on our country! the eyes of every angel will follow thine, and weep at its abandonment by the Christian princes.

Can no appeal be made to Humanity by Learning?

MAUROCORDATO.

In Austria no books are redd but cookery-books, missals, and lives of the saints. Russia contains only one man of erudition, the archimandrite Hyacinthos, who has collected and translated the most valuable portion of Chinese literature. On suspicion of being a thinker, he has been banished to Archangel, and is dying by an affection of the lungs.

COLOCOTRONI.

In France, in England, is there none who will speak aloud for us?

MAUROCORDATO.

The literary men of France have a censor over them; upon which some have become missionaries and jesuits, and some Mahometans: others write odes on the triumphs of the *duc d'Angoulême*, and on the trocodero in the nursery of the *duchess de Berri*. England has partymen in profusion; in court-livery and sans-culottes: if a solitary, sedate republican should rise up in that country, they would unite and tear him to pieces; just as the beggars of two streets, against a stranger at the corner who (they suspect) may beg.

COLOCOTRONI.

The English have no need of a republic, none

of their habits or imaginations resting on it, and enjoying as they do what liberty they desire. Yet I cannot see why, when I myself am shaven, I should break the razor, or hinder the use of one in those who want it; as they do in regard to freedom, from an imperfect and erroneous calculation in the leger-book. Nearly all the writers may indeed be hired by the government, and the few of them who are not hired may live in expectancy of place and profit; yet the public is much interested in our cause, and has borne toward us that liberality, for which nothing short of eternal gratitude can be an adequate return.

MAUROCORDATO.

General, I have received from an Englishman, who resides at Florence, a military map of Greece, in which all those places are accurately marked where great battles have been fought, and to which a topographical description is added, wherever it was to be found either in ancient historians or modern travelers.

COLOCOTRONI.

The ancients, who excell us in most things of importance, excell us principally in military science. Every great general was a great inventor. Within the memory of man, I believe, not a stratagem has been thought of, by any one in Europe,

be it old or new, original or borrowed. Campaigns are formed as much by a receit as custards, and sieges as cheesecakes. I know the better part of Greece perfectly, and only wish your English friend could devise the means for me, of bringing my enemy where beaten enemies were brought formerly.

The Greeks have performed, in the last three years, as many arduous actions as their ancestors ever performed within the same period, and have shewn a constancy such as they have never exhibited since the days of Pericles. The British force is composed of three nations, each striving for preeminence in valour. Hence whenever a large body of troops is assembled, there must be a considerable portion of each, and vigour is exerted by all: but when smaller detachments of one nation are sent out on what they call diversions, we generally find them fail; there being no such spirit, or at best a very faint one, of rivalry and emulation. It cannot be dissembled that all the victories of the English, in the last fifty years, have been gained by the high courage and steddy discipline of the soldier; and the most remarkable, where the prudence and skill of the commander were altogether wanting. Place any distinguished general of theirs, where Murillo was placed in

America, Mina in Spain, and then inform me what are your hopes, and whether you expect from him the same activity and the same expedients. Whatever is done by the English, is done by open force, to which nothing is precursory or subsidiary. Our enemies the Turks are somewhat of this character. Now I lay it down as a maxim, that the weaker of two powers at variance should never employ the same weapons as the stronger: when it cannot find better, at least it should look for what are very different and very unexpected. If we Greeks ever form our regiments on the model of the English, we shall lose half our strength. By good fortune, our troops are composed of men united by blood or neighbourhood, and partly put into motion by the spirit of love and concord, partly by emulation: for the different regions of Greece, you know, are just as much rivals now as they were anciently. In no other part of Europe is there in the military establishment the least consideration of moral force: vices and virtues are equally compressed: men are filed and packeted like pins and needles, according to their length: an inch in stature divides two brothers, two friends, two rivals in the affections of the same mistress, leaving room for the union of the brave man and the coward. Nothing that is ridiculous,

absurd, injurious, or offensive, is omitted in the modern practise: and if your English commentator draws his conclusions from it, and recommends it to our imitation, we have only to thank him for his kind intention.

Greece has much to do, much not to do. God, who hath restored her miraculously to her enthusiastic and vigorous youth, will guide and protect her in it, and will open by degrees before her all the sources of knowledge, and all the means of improvement and prosperity.

MAUROCORDATO.

The paper I hold in my hand recommends the very thing on which you particularly insist, the diversity of weapon; nor does the author quote an English authority, but the authority of a far more illustrious character than any Englishman hath shewn himself within the recollection of the living, and who suggested it to his country, America, when she was about to contend with a military force, to which hers was disproportionate both in numbers and in discipline. The interest, says my correspondent, I feel and have always felt, in the fortune of those who struggle to be free, persuades me to submitt some reflexions, perhaps not unimportant to your country. If they were entirely my own, adds he, I might hesitate more to

offer them, altho of late years I have studied these matters with some attention and have examined them with some industry. Franklin proposed to the consideration of the Anglo-Americans, whether the bow be not a more effectual weapon than the musket. Its lightness, the ease with which it may be kept dry, with which it may be concealed and recovered, with which it may be laden and discharged, with which it may be preserved in order, or replaced, are not its only advantages.

Patriotic as are the Greeks, there are many who, on receiving a musket from the government, would be induced to return home, that they might rather employ it in the chase than in battle. The bow, at least in the beginning, would not serve the purpose, and would never hold forth such an inducement.

When ammunition is exhausted in the villages and in the mountains, where we fight most frequently, the soldier can find no more, and is no longer a soldier for some days; while every wood and thicket, every house and shed, produces the material of arrows.

Youths, from their tender age or from their idle habits, incapable of carrying heavy arms, would carry a bow, it being no impediment either in attack or flight, and, being thrown away, it

is little loss to them, and no advantage to the enemy.

The advice of Franklin was not rejected because it was irrational or reprehensible, but because the Anglo-Americans were nearly all well exercised in the management of fire-arms, and because they found in the cities a superabundance of ammunition. It is not so in Greece: the choice is yet to be made; and you will surely make it, says our friend, of that material, which is at once the most plentiful and the most easy to work, that in which the exercise is the least laborious, and the attainment of skill the least difficult.

Suppose two kinds of arms, or, if you please, two kinds of tactics, equally good: if either of these be unexpected by the enemy, that is preferable. Even the worse, and considerably so, the first time it is practised, will give the advantage to those who employ it, unless its defects be too evident.

The ancients, he thinks with you, reasoned much more and much better on this business than the moderns; and they always used a great diversity of weapons in the same army, the advantage of which is demonstrated by Folard in his commentary on Polybius.

The arrow acts in three manners; rectilinearly,

curvilinearly, and perpendicularly; the musket-ball in one only, the rectilinear.

Twelve arrows are discharged before the musket can be discharged the third time, even supposing that it is always clean, and that it never misses fire.

The musket without bayonet, as are many of ours, is very inconvenient; for we must often draw the sword, and then what becomes of it? while the bow, thrown in a moment across the shoulder, leaves the right-hand at liberty, and the body unencumbered, for all the other ways of defence or of attack.

The Turks fight in close array; so that every arrow strikes either man or horse; and it is remarkable that a moderate puncture makes the horse intractable, while to a severe musket-shot he often seems for a time insensible.

The report of fire-arms by night or in ambuscade betrays the soldier; the arrow not. Even by day it sometimes is expedient that Death come veiled.

The lock of fire-arms is the most important part of them, and is the most liable to injury, from a blow, from a fall, or from service. The musket is composed of many parts, all subject to be detached or loosened, some to be lost, as the

rod and the flint, and the loss may not be perceived until it is fatal.

If any considerable body of archers, well supported, drew upon an unprepared enemy, (and all at this day are so) they would gain, if not the battle, the advantage. No fire could produce such destruction, such confusion, or leave effects so immediately visible, so generally appalling.

He who carries a bow instead of a musket, may also carry provisions for five entire days; an incalculable advantage in a country laid waste on all sides, and which will enable him, in most situations, to choose and change his encampment as he pleases. When a foot soldier thus armed has taken the horse of an enemy, he may mount and use him, should circumstances require it, which he could not do with musket and bayonet, even in case of necessity.

The bow has no need of cleaning; the musket has need of it every day; and after a march or an engagement, when it may want it most, the soldier feels little inclination to this surcharge of labour, and often has not tow, sometimes not water, as ours experienced on the mountains very frequently last summer, when even in the plains occasionally there was barely a sufficiency to quench their thirst.

By the lightness of this weapon, and the little danger there is of its sounding loud by striking against any thing, ammunition-waggons and stores may be set on fire, applying to the arrow inflammable substances.

The Turks are still masters of cities and fortresses which we must take. No nation defends a place so obstinately and courageously as they do. We also have some which they will soon attack. Here the bow is greatly a better weapon than the musket: for in the hurry of firing on those who mount to the assault, few balls are perfectly well rammed; hence they fall out or fall inoffensively; and nothing is more difficult than to hit a man, aiming at him perpendicularly. The arrow on this occasion would seldom miss. We may have reason then to be glad that they no longer use the bow, in which formerly lay their strength.

COLOCOTRONI.

These observations are worth attention. What have you besides?

MAUROCORDATO.

The observations on defensive armour are original and important. Even so late as the reign of Louis XIV the officer wore it. In the battle of Waterloo, more glorious to the victor than any since that of Leuctra, (if perhaps you except two

others won in distant times by the same nation, at Poictiers and at Blenheim) three regiments of light cavalry in succession were ordered to attack the French cuirassiers. Each made several charges, and lost the greater part of its men, in killed or wounded. This, continues my author, belongs to history, and shall find its place there, together with the enquiries and reflexions it excites...an imprudence unexampled! If, adds he, these English regiments had been defended by the armour I am about to propose for yours, they would have lost much fewer, and, altho no troops are braver, more expert, or better disciplined, than the French cuirassiers, would probably have repulsed them: for the English horses were fresher, not having surmounted such acclivities, nor having toiled so long over a deep and tenacious clay.

Suppose it possible to discover a substance on which the seasons have little or no effect; which resists heat, cold, moisture...iron does not.

Suppose it possible to discover a substance which leaves every limb its elasticity, its full play and action...iron does not.

Suppose it possible to discover a substance in which the soldier, if necessary, may sleep...in iron he cannot.

In fact, general, he recommends the use of

cork armour; the usual thickness of which material is sufficient to resist the bayonet, and which a musket-ball will rarely penetrate. By employing this, the soldier who cannot swim has all the advantages of him who can: he may be knocked down in it, but he will not be killed nor badly wounded: seldom will a particle of it enter the flesh, and in case it should, no substance whatever is so easily extracted or so perfectly, nor will there ever be those contusions which are often mortal in the head: for altho the sabre does not penetrate the metal helmet, it indents it so deeply as to produce the same effect. We have experienced the dizziness that the helmet occasions in a few hours of exertion: this destroys both activity and strength. Nothing is so cool to the head as cork, or presents so equal and wholesome a temperature in all seasons. Its additional weight is imperceptible to the horse; nor is the dismounted soldier lost, as the steel-cased cuirassier is. This armour is cheap and durable; it occupies no time in cleaning, no time in putting on: every one can mend or replace it.

Some other of the projects must be left to the discretion of our Government: they are political rather than military; they are calculated to act in-

stantaneously and effectually. The author himself says on them, *There are circumstances in which Themistocles should be heard before Aristides, and indeed without him.*

He recommends that the Acro-corinthos, and some other positions, should be flanked with strong Martello towers, and gives an account of an English ship of seventy-four guns, utterly ruined off Corsica by such a tower, mounting one only. Here is also a proposal to construct, or rather to employ, for we have them in all our ports, gunboats similar to those used by the Russians in the battle of Tchesme.

COLOCOTRONI.

I hope we are not yet reduced to imitate the Russians in any thing. The least inventive of all the human races, and the most hostile to all inventions, can hardly be presented to Greeks for a model, by one who appears well acquainted with our history, with our capacities, and with our wants.

MAUROCORDATO.

He informs me that the invention of this is due to his countryman and friend, General Bentham, a man equally distinguished for courage, humanity, and science, and whose brother I have heard represented as the only true philosopher of his

nation, excepting the physical and experimental, since Locke*.

COLOCOTRONI.

Prince, I know almost as little of English philosophers or English philosophy as the emperor of Turkey, or Morocco, or Austria. War is my pursuit: come to the point; let me see his project. I may recommend it: for the wisest men and most useful things want recommendation; and the tongue of the fool is often requisite to the inventions of the wise.

MAUROCORDATO.

General Bentham commanded the naval arma-

* Maurocordato here expresses an opinion more prevalent on the Continent than in England, where Bentham is not come into fashion, and Locke is gone out. No wonder such an *exclamation* should have burst forth (as it did) from a philosopher of Prussia, under the night-hag Despotism; for the philosophy both of Locke and of Bentham points to freedom. Justice had scales before the time of the latter; but her weights were never quite exact, nor scientifically divided, nor carried low enough down. Having redd his works only in French, excepting the Treatise on Usury, which his brother lent me, I can say nothing of the style. His merits and defects, as far as I may judge of them, are accurately and perspicuously laid down by M. Hazlitt in *The Spirits of the Age.*

ment of Russia at the battle of Tchesme, under (in politics this word usually means *over*) prince Potemkin. Gunboats had always been built solidly, with strong traverses, to prevent the recoil of the gun. Hence, after every fire, the motion of the vessel was so violent and of so long continuance, that the discharges were intermitted and uncertain. One would imagine that very little experience was requisite to demonstrate how, leaving the cannon to its recoil, and the vessel to its own action upon the water, no violent shock could be given, and how the succeding discharges would be more rapid and more easily directed. Instead of the old gun-boat, constructed at much expense and soon ruined, he placed heavy cannon upon barks deemed before incapable of bearing them: but it was soon apparent that, on still water, they were adequate to destroy the most formidable ships of the line. The general shewed the troops and mariners, that the water itself gives the proper degree both of recession and of resistence, without danger to the cannoneer or detriment to the boat. The advantages of the invention are these: that the boats, if they are to be built, do not cost a fifth of the others: that worse timber and a smaller quantity of it will serve: that all, even the lightest, may be adapted

in little time: that merchant-ships taken from the enemy may be converted into them.

COLOCOTRONI.

Do the English use them constantly? for in these matters they have more authority with me than in others.

MAUROCORDATO.

They do not: because they have no need of gunboats on their coasts, commanding, as they do, the ocean: because too their seas are tempestuous, and their expeditions for the greater part distant: and because they are reluctant that their enemies should acquire from them the benefit of an invention, by which they themselves could not profit in the same degree. The small gunboat not presenting its side to an enemy, the Turk, the worst of cannoneers, would hardly ever strike it; while it would rarely miss him, and would never fail to discourage where it might not disable.

My correspondent is particularly urgent that every mariner and soldier on board should be armed with a bow, and with a longer and heavier pike than any in common use. Recurring to actions by land, he observes that the length of the pike gave the victory to the Greeks in the first battle against Xerxes, when the *Immortals* of that autocrat were repulsed by the Lacedemonians, accord-

ing to Herodotus, from this cause only. The bow is recommended at sea still more earnestly, and in our gunboats and small vessels most particularly, from the necessity of loading them lightly with ammunition.

COLOCOTRONI.

Should any of these suggestions be introduced, it must be done suddenly, secretly, and diffusively.

MAUROCORDATO.

The political reflexions of my correspondent will be the subject of some future consideration. To obtain our independence, he would propose to the Turk the same annual subsidy *as comes into the treasury at present*, which is little more than a fifth of what is levied: he would engage that we should admitt into our ports no vessel of a potentate at war with Turkey, and that we should sign no treaty of alliance with any one upon her confines: he would consent that all the Greeks in Asia and other parts should be united in the territory bounded on the north by Olympus and the Ceraunians, on the East by the Egean sea, and including Crete. Property should be exchanged by Turkish and Greek commissioners, aided by the consuls of France, England, and Sweden, and the contract should be terminated in three years in all parts of both countries.

He informs me that many Christian and Jewish families have still the records of places in Crete, where the treasures of private houses, as also of churches and of convents, were deposited on its subjugation. Turkey does not derive one hundred and eighty thousand zecchins annually from the conquest. She would readily compromise in a few years, probably on the breaking out of the first war, for the tax stipulated, and accept ten or twelve years purchase. Indeed on her expressing any doubt of security in our faith, we might offer as much, with no fear of refusal, and could obtain it from England. So moderate a debt would rather be a bond to unite us than a burden.

COLOCOTRONI.

A society of Englishmen, no less patriotic, has kindly sent to me three hundred bibles, in readiness for the next campaign; with an exhortation to prohibit all dancing in private houses, unless among persons of a certain age and rank; a remonstrance against the letting of urine at the corners of streets, or lanes, or stable doors; and a form of prayer to be offered up in our churches.

MAUROCORDATO.

Instead of this latter, our patriarch may be requested to insert in the Litany a petition to the

Almighty, that, in the bowels of his compassion, it may please him to retain in the government of the *Seven Isles* his Excellency Sir Thomas Maitland, so that the people shall never cease to sigh for union with us; and that likewise, in his infinite mercy, he may remove all impediment to his Excellency, by removing for ever Lord Guildford, in whose presence Learning would almost forget her losses, and dismembered Greece her sufferings.

COLOCOTRONI.

Yes, Greece shall arise again, like Ulysses from under the wand of Pallas, when his wrinkles were smoothened, and his tattered garment cast away from him. Nevertheless, whatever arms she takes up, she may look forward to years of agony, and to more enemies than the Turk. All the old governments in Europe will attempt to increase our difficulties, and, when they have augmented them to the utmost in their power, will point them out as the natural fruits of insubordination, for such they call resistence, which is the more criminal in their eyes, the longer and the more patiently you have borne oppression. Happily we have no allie: we have an oppressor the less. If Spain or Portugal had any, that allie would model the adopted form of government; in other

words, would change the features without diminishing the weight of slavery. Providence, I trust, will favour our exertions: I would propose then to leave a wide space between us, and the dominions of a government more systematically and more degradingly tyrannical. Indignant as we justly are at the unworthy treatment we have received, and conscious, as we cannot but be, that we are the undegenerate descendents of a people, which never since the foundation of the world hath beheld a rival in glory, we must acknowledge that no conqueror is milder than the Turkish, no religion more tolerant, no judge more dispassionate, no law more equitable. But many countries, once Grecian, lie desolate: Crete can hardly discover the traces of five amidst her hundred cities. True; islands, which when free are the happiest of countries, are the most miserable when they are subjected. For the subjection endured under modern governments, is far different in its effects from that endured under our ancestors and the Romans. Towns, harbours, and marts, arose upon it: be my witnesses on one side, Cyprus, Lesbos, Chios, and ye starry host of Cyclades! stand on the other, Sicily, Sardinia, Ireland, with your herds of mendicants, your bands of robbers,

your pestiferous marshes, and your deserted ports. What countries are naturally more fertile? what more wretched? Wild theories have not rendered them so; and yet the only mischiefs to be extirpated are wild theories. The cities of the Valtelline, under the protection of Switzerland, Ragusa, Genoa, Venice, had enjoyed a long prosperity, all several hundred, some past a thousand years, and one had arrived, by its prudence and wisdom, at an age which appeared forbidden to human institutions, when suddenly a sage, too autocratical to be taught any thing by sages of another class, draws around his shoulders a cat-skin hung with saints, and is informed, as he swallows his morning draught of brandy, that if they really were happy, they were happy from wild theories, and must be all corrected. Let us, Maurocordato, cast our eyes a little way into the *wilds* of these theories; no such wilds as Siberia can shew us, nor the Ukraine, nor the Chersonese, nor the plains of Hungary, nor the Campania of the Popes and Bourbons, each by nature so fertile, each by despotism so corroded and exhausted; but such *wilds* as our Attica and our Thessaly and our Bœotia once rejoiced in; wilds of equality; wilds where the heart of man, in full expansion,

bate high and freely thro the course of ages; where the human form possessed such dignity, as none other than a native of this country could represent or could imagine. Wild theories! that unite men in justice and amity! Wild theories! that gave birth and nurture to every art and every science; that even taught reason and humanity to the despot who lashed the sea!

Solon! Aristides! Epaminondas! Phocion! ye are authors and abettors of wild theories. Eschylus! we deemed thee generous, heroic, self-devoted, as thy own Prometheus: thy blood we thought flowed for thy country, for civilization, for enlightened and free mankind.. it flowed for wild theories. O Sophocles! O Euripides! what lessons have you given us! wild theories!

And yet, sir, for scorn must have its period, if we use our memories, and reject our reason, as autocrats would tell us we are bound to do, as for national power, which many look chiefly to, as for national defence, which interests all, Rome hath ever been said to have existed in a state of infancy under her kings, of maturity under her consuls, of decrepitude and decay under her emperors. People are disposed to acknowledge, that a monarch is more prompt in giving his orders for invasion and annoyance, and that he can both

commence and conduct hostilities with greater secrecy and decision. Glorious prerogative! Be it so! There must then be some strangely countervailing disadvantage in the form and structure of his government; for never since the creation of the world was there an instance of a monarchy conquering a republic, where the people were equally numerous in the latter, or within a third; while republics in all ages have conquered many kingdoms, of which the population was the double and even the triple of theirs.

Monarchy has all her blood in the head: she looks healthy to those who see health in flushed faces, and strong to those who look for strength in swollen limbs. Strange deception! if indeed any thing is strange where all principles are perverted; where what is best must not be, where what is worst must be; where tyranny alone has rights, and usurpation alone has privileges. *You shall enchain Poland; you shall do with Italy and with Illyria what you please; you shall dismember free and happy Saxony.*

What! no more? my brothers!

Wait a little, our brother, wait a little! Wait, our brother, four years at furthest: then advance: you will be hailed as a deliverer from within and from without. His most christian Majesty is

anxious to recover the influence of his family in Spain: the English, who waged war to prevent it from having any, are not in a condition to interpose the slightest impediment, and the ministers are more interested in suppressing what are called constitutions, than in maintaining the dignity of their throne.

Thus argue the holy Allies.

England is indeed the only country in the world where the ministers are chosen from their dissimilitude to the people. I never think of them without the idea of the bear ridden by the monkey; the strong by the weak, the grave by the pert, the quiet by the mischievous. Since the time of Pitt the First (in this manner will politicians teach historians to write) she has been governed, with hardly an interval, by the most inordinate and desperate gamesters, that ever her *subscription-houses* drove pennyless down stairs.

MAUROCORDATO.

There is an axiom, that the best if corrupted is the worst. It grieves me to think of England, once the favorite of Liberty, and sitting in light alone. All the French, however, cannot have lost entirely that spirit with which twenty millions were animated so lately. His most christian

Majesty is said in the chamber of deputies to be *destined by Providence to close the abyss of revolutions.* He may perhaps close that abyss (as he would any other) by falling into it.

The saints of the Holy Alliance punish with imprisonment and poverty those who write against the christian religion, while they themselves act against it openly, and * assist in crushing its de-

* Le consul Minciaki, qui avait permis de noliser les batimens avec *pavillon Russe,* pour transporter à Psara les Osmanlis qui s'y sont baignés dans le sang des chretiens, etait severement jugé même par les Francs. This I transcribe from a journal of monarchal France, a journal in part composed by Chateaubriant.

Austria hath shewn us abundantly, that her sympathies are stronger with despotism than with christianity. Her ships, both of war and commerce, have repeatedly and sedulously brought supplies of food and munition to the Turks, blockaded and besieged.

Even the most Christian king himself has conveyed in his navy the money sent by the pashaw of Egypt for the payment of his troops in the Peloponnesus. The military hirelings, who were the readiest instruments of Bonaparte's tyranny, are become those (and indeed may without shame) of this ambitious satrap; who, barbarian as he is, is a soldier of more valour, a prince of more honour, and a politician of more conduct and capacity. If the French ministry has engaged

fenders, men descended from those who first received it among the gentiles. Not only the catholic princes, professing the most intolerant, the most rapacious, and the most insolent of superstitions, but the potent and sole protector of the Greek church abandons it to the lust of the Musselman. I dare not call this pusillanimity, still less dare I call it perfidiousness, baseness, infamy; but I may lawfully ask whether any prince, in modern days or ancient, has been guilty of a greater: for in my zeal in favour of royalty, always amiable, always august, and in our times more so than ever, I would fondly hope that none has committed any thing beyond a peccadillo, and that in political com-

them in such a service, it has acted with some wisdom. It may now triumphantly cry out to the factious, *See what a detestable gang of rogues and vagabonds, are not only those who have long ago betrayed you, but those in whom you still would place your trust!*

The *Amaranthe* acted in the service of the Egyptians both before Rhodes and before Crete.

If the report be true that Lord Cochrane is to take a command in defence of Greece, we may confidently hope that he will destroy any naval force the French government may appoint to act against her. The same blow will dissipate the Turks and disjoint the whole body of their *holy allies*.

putation, even this is nothing worse. Diocletian, and the other Roman emperors who persecuted the christians, did less than was done by their successors from pulpits and convents, monks and priests, who took upon themselves the ridiculous title of pope. Religion was to be totally changed in the state by the christians, and this change the civil power always prevents; but the popes, as these usurpers called themselves, were under no apprehension that the new religion should itself be subverted, for it is one of their tenets that it never shall be; their only fear was, that they should lose a portion of their power by the rejection of absurdities, and a portion of their wealth by the reduction of ceremonies to the simplicity and paucity of the original institution. These however, popes or pagans, are not so censurable as those princes, whose power and riches are in no danger on any side, and who by seceding from the cause of humanity, which we vindicate and defend, shew the world their utter indifference to that faith which they, one and all, have sworn publicly to protect.

COLOCOTRONI.

To rise against oppression; to teach our children their duties and their rights; to remind them of

their ancestors, and to rescue them from the seraglio, these are crimes! They are crimes, in the eyes of whom? of those who profess the religion of Christ! holy men! sacred allies! apostolic! catholic! We, Maurocordato, are inconsiderate, rash, frantic; for what gain we by our vigils, fasts, and toils; by our roofless houses, our devastated farms, our long marches, our broken sleep upon the snowy mountains, unless it be the approbation of our fathers now in bliss, and the consolatory hope of it from our posterity? The rest of Europe is reduced to slavery, one heroic race excepted: God alone can foresee the termination of our conflict; but of this we both are certain; that, whenever we fall, in whatever part of Greece our bodies lie, they will lie by the side of those who have defended the same cause; and that there is not a pillar, in ancient days erected by a grateful country, that does not in its fragments tell our story.

The emperor of Russia has had the address, by the congress of Verona, to involve the states of Europe in war again. He will within a year or two be able to put into execution his project on the side of Turkey, having first enfeebled

Persia, by pushing her forward so precipitately. I foresaw and foretold all this. In the animal world the insects have the largest empire, in the political the Russians. The dominions of the czar extend over a space equal to a third of the old world. They are the parents of many vast empires, uncounted tribes, and unknown generations, and are seven times larger than the nearest planet, including in the calculation all its gulphs and oceans. His subjects are educated in blind submission to his will; and at least two millions of them either are soldiers, or may become so without any loss to agriculture and the other arts. Is there then no danger to Europe from so enormous a power, put into motion and directed by ministers who have been raised from obscurity and want, who have abjured their country, and who must flourish on the decomposition of others? How large a portion of North America has been publickly claimed by the autocrat, the dominions of Spain, of England, and of the United-States, from the thirty-first to the sixtieth degree! enough to constitute three great empires.

No nation seems yet to have divined the importance of California: the Russians are destined to teach it. Possession of this country was taken by Drake, who called it New Albion...The wisest work on political relations is that of my old acquaintance the late governor Pownal...too wise ever to be adopted by our government, even if no impediments had been thrown in the way since it was written.

* * * *

I have occasionally, but rarely, scattered a few verses amongst the Dialogues. The following, connected in subject with much, and in spirit with all that has gone before, may stand here.

We are what suns and winds and waters make us;
The mountains are our sponsors, and the rills
Fashion and win their nursling with their smiles.
But where the land is dim from tyranny,
There tiny pleasures occupy the place
Of glories and of duties; as the feet
Of fabled faeries when the sun goes down
Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day.
Then Justice, called the eternal one above,
Is more inconstant than the buoyant form
That bursts into existence from the froth
Of ever-varying ocean: what is best
Then becomes worst; what loveliest, most deformed.
The heart is hardest in the softest climes,
The passions flourish, the affections die.

O thou vast tablet of these awful truths,
That fillest all the space between the seas,
Spreading from Venice's deserted courts
To the Tarentine and Hydruntine mole,
What lifts thee up? what shakes thee? 'tis the breath
Of God! awake, ye nations! spring to life!

Let the last work of his righthand appear
Fresh with his image . . . Man.

Thou recreant slave
That sittest afar off and helpest not,
O thou degenerate Albion! with what shame
Do I survey thee, pushing forth the spunge
At thy spear's length, in mockery at the thirst
Of holy Freedom in his agony,
And prompt and keen to pierce the wounded side!

Must Italy then wholly rot away
Amidst her slime, before she germinate
Into fresh vigour, into form again?
What thunder bursts upon mine ear! some isle
Hath surely risen from the gulphs profound,
Eager to suck the sunshine from the breast
Of beauteous Nature, and to catch the gale
From golden Hermus and Melena's brow.
A greater thing than isle, than continent,
Than earth itself, than ocean circling earth,
Hath risen there; regenerate Man hath risen.

Generous old bard of Chios! not that Jove
Deprived thee in thy latter days of sight
Would I complain, but that no higher theme
Than a disdainful youth, a lawless King,
A pestilence, a pyre, awoke thy song,
When on the Chian coast, one javelin's throw
From where thy tombstone, where thy cradle stood,

Twice twenty self-devoted Greeks assailed
The naval host of Asia, at one blow
Scattered it into air . . . and Greece was free . . .
And ere these glories beamed, thy day had closed.

Let all that Elis ever saw give way,
All that Olympian Jove e'er smiled upon.
The Marathonian columns never told
A tale more glorious, never Salamis,
Nor, faithful in the centre of the false,
Platea, nor Anthela, from whose mount
Benignant Ceres wards the blessed Laws,
And sees the Amphictyon dip his weary foot
In the warm streamlet of the strait below *.

Goddess! altho thy brow was never reared
Among the Powers that guarded or assailed
Perfidious Ilion, parricidal Thebes,
Or other walls whose war-belt e'er inclosed
Man's congregated crimes and vengeful Pain,
Yet hast thou touched the extremes of grief and joy . . .
Grief upon Enna's mead and Hell's ascent,
A solitary mother . . . joy beyond,
Far beyond, that thy woe, in this thy fane:
The tears were human, but the bliss divine.

I, in the land of strangers, and deprest
With sad and certain presage for my own,

* The Amphictyons met annually in the temple of Ceres near Anthela.

Exult at hope's fresh dayspring, tho afar,
There where my youth was not unexercised
By chiefs in willing war and faithful song:
Shades as they were, they were not empty shades,
Whose bodies haunt our world and blear our sun...
Obstruction worse than swamp and shapeless sands.
Peace, praise, eternal gladness to the souls
That, rising from the seas into the heavens,
Have ransomed first their country with their blood!

O thou immortal Spartan! at whose name
The marble table sounds beneath my palms,
Leonidas! even thou wilt not disdain
To mingle names august as these with thine;
Nor thou, twin star of glory, thou whose rays
Streamed over Corinth on the double sea,
Achaian and Saronic; whom the sons
Of Syracuse, when Death removed thy light,
Wept more than slavery ever made them weep,
But shed (if gratitude is sweet) sweet tears...
For the hand that then poured ashes o'er their heads
Was loosened from its desperate chain by thee.

What now can press mankind into one mass,
For Tyranny to tread the more secure?
From gold alone is drawn the guilty wire
That Adulation trills: she mocks the tone
Of Duty, Courage, Virtue, Piety,
And under her sits Hope. O how unlike
That graceful form in azure vest arrayed,
With brow serene, and eyes on heaven alone

In patience fixt, in fondness unobscured!
What monsters coil beneath the spreading tree
Of Despotism! what wastes extend around!
What poison floats upon the distant breeze!
But who are those that cull and deal its fruit?
Creatures that shun the light and fear the shade,
Bloated and fierce, Sleep's mien and Famine's cry...
Rise up again, rise in thy dignity,
Dejected Man, and scare this brood away.

CONVERSATION XIII.

ALFIERI

AND

SALOMON, THE FLORENTINE JEW.

ALFIERI

AND

SALOMON, THE FLORENTINE JEW.

ALFIERI.

Let us walk to the window, Signor Salomon... and now, instead of the silly simpering compliments repeated at introductions, let me assure you that you are the only man in Florence with whom I would willingly exchange a salutation.

SALOMON.

I must think myself highly flattered, Signor Conte, having always heard that you are not only the greatest democrat, but also the greatest aristocrat, in Europe.

ALFIERI.

These two things, however opposite, as your smile would indicate, are not so irreconcilable as you imagine. Let us first understand the words, and then talk about them. The democrat is he

who wishes the people to have its due share in the government, and this share, if you please, shall be the principal one. The aristocrat, in our days, is contented with no actual share at all in it: but if a man of family is conscious of his dignity, and resentful that another has invaded it, he may be, and is universally, called an aristocrat. The principal difference is, that the one carries outward what the other carries inward. I am thought an aristocrat by the Florentines, for conversing with few people, and for changing my shirt and shaving my beard on other days than festivals; which the most aristocratical of them never do, considering it, no doubt, as an excess. I am however from my soul a republican, if prudence and modesty will authorize any man to call himself so; and this I trust I have demonstrated in the most valuable of my works, the dialogue with my friend at Sienna. The aristocratical part of me, if part of me it must be called, hangs loose and keeps off insects. I see no aristocracy in the children of sharpers from behind the counter, nor, placing the matter in the most favorable point of view, in the descendents of free citizens, who accepted from any vile enslaver, French, Spanish, German, priest or monk, with a hive on his head and a key at his girdle, the titles of counts and marquisses. In Piedemont the

matter is different: we must either have been the rabble or their lords: we were military; and we retain over the populace the same rank and spirit as our ancestors held over the soldiery.

SALOMON.

Signor Conte, I have heard of levelers, but I have never seen one: all are disposed to level down, but nobody to level up. As for nobility, there is none in Europe, beside the Venetian. Nobility must be self-constituted and independent: the free alone are noble; slavery, like death, levels all. The English comes nearest to the Venetian: they are independent, but want the main characteristic, the *self-constituted.* You have been in England, Signor Conte, and can judge of them better than I can.

ALFIERI.

England, as you know, is governed by Pitt, the most insidious of her republicans, and the most hostile to aristocracy. Jealous of power, and distrustful of the people that raised him to it, he enriches and attaches to him the commercial part of the nation, by the most wasteful prodigality both in finance and war, and he loosens from the landed all the leading proprietors, by raising them to the peerage. Nearly a third of the lords have been created by him, and shew themselves de-

votedly his creatures*. This Empusa puts his assis foot on the French, and his iron one on the English. He possesses not the advantage possest by insects, which, if they see but one inch before them, see that inch distinctly. He knows not that the machine which at present runs on so briskly, will fall to pieces the moment it stops. He will indeed carry his point in debasing the aristocracy; but he will equally debase the people. Undivided power he will continue to enjoy; but, after his death, none will be able to say from any visible proof or appearance, *how glorious a people did he govern!* He will have changed its character in all ranks and conditions. After this it is little to say that he will have exalted its rival, who, without his interposition, would have sunk under distress and crime. But interposition was necessary to his aggrandizement, enabling him to distribute in twenty years, if he should live so long, more wealth among his friends and partisans, than has been squandered by the uncontrolled

* All this refers to a state of things belonging to history, but past away from us; it being evident that nothing can be more respectable than the present English nobility. Alfieri spoke scornfully and disdainfully; because he was generally ill received in England: for altho he was at that time the greatest man in Europe, he was not acknowledged or known to be so.

profusion of French monarchs, from the first Louis to the last.

SALOMON.

How happens it that England, richer and more powerful than all other states, should still contain fewer nobles?

ALFIERI.

The greater part of the English nobility has neither power nor title. Even those who are noble both de jure and de facto, the hereditary lords of manors with large estates attached to them, claim no titles, at home or abroad. Hence in all foren countries the true English gentleman is placed below his rank, which naturally and necessarily is far higher than that of your slipshod counts and lottery-office marquisses, whose gamekeepers with their high plumes, cocked hats, and hilts of rapiers, have no other occupation than to stand behind the carriage, if the rotten plank will bear them; whose game is the wren and the redbreast, and whose beat is across the market.

Father Menestrier, who, both as a Frenchman and as a jesuit, speaks very contemptuously of English nobility, admits the gentlemen to this dignity. Their property, their information, their political influence, and their moral character, place them beyond measure above the titularies of this

country, be the rank what it may; and it is a remarkable proof of moderation in some, and of contemptuousness in others, that they do not openly claim from their king, or assume without any such intervention, the titles arising from landed wealth, which conciliate the attention and civility of all classes, and indeed of all individuals, abroad.

It is among those who stand between the peerage and the people, that there exists a greater mass of virtue and of wisdom than all the rest of the universe contains. Much of their dignified simplicity may be attributed to the plainness of their religion, and, what will always be imitated, to the decorous virtue of their king: for whatever may be the defects of either, if we compare them with others round us, they are excellent.

SALOMON.

A young religion jumps upon the shoulders of an older one, and soon becomes like her, by mockery of her tricks, her cant, and her decrepitude. Meanwhile the old one shakes with indignation, and swears there is neither relationship nor likeness. Was there ever a religion in the world that was not the true religion, or was there ever a king that was not the best of kings?

ALFIERI.

In the latter case we must have arrived very nigh to perfection; since it is evident from the authority of the gravest men, theologians, presidents, judges, corporations, universities, senates, that every prince is still better than his father, *of blessed memory, now with God.* If they continue to rise thus transcendently, earth in a little time will be incapable of holding them, and higher heavens must be raised upon the highest heavens for their reception. The lumber of our Italian courts, the most crazy part of which is that which rests upon a red cushion in a gilt chair, with stars and sheep and crosses dangling from it, must be approached as Artaxerxes and Domitian. These automatons, we are told, nevertheless, are very condescending. Poor fools who tell us it! ignorant that where on one side is condescension, on the other side must be baseness. The rascals have ruined my physiognomy. I wear an habitual sneer upon my face, God confound them for it! even when I whisper a word of love in the prone ear of my *donna**.

SALOMON.

This temper or constitution of mind I am afraid may do injury to your works.

* She who was the *donna* of Alfieri is now the *donna* of a French picture-dealer, a maker and vender of Poussins.

ALFIERI.

Surely not to all: my satire at least must be the better for it.

SALOMON.

I think differently. No satire can be excellent where displeasure is expressed with acrimony and vehemence. When satire ceases to smile it should be momentarily, and for the purpose of inculcating a moral. Juvenal is hardly more a satirist than Lucan: he is indeed a vigorous and bold declamer, but he stamps too often, and splashes up too much filth. We Italians have no delicacy in wit; we have indeed no conception of it; we fancy we must be weak if we are not offensive. The scream of Pulcinello is imitated more easily, than the masterly strokes of Plautus, or the sly insinuations of Catullus and of Flaccus.

ALFIERI.

We are the least witty of men because we are the most trifling.

SALOMON.

You would persuade me then that to be witty one must be grave: this is surely a contradiction.

ALFIERI.

I would persuade you only, that banter, pun, and quibble, are the properties of light men and shallow capacities; that genuine humour and true wit require a sound and capacious mind; which is

always a grave one. Contemptuousness is not incompatible with them: worthless is that man who feels no contempt for the worthless, and weak who treats their emptiness as a thing of weight. At first it may seem a paradox, but it is perfectly true, that the gravest nations have been the wittiest; and in those nations some of the gravest men: in England Swift and Addison, in Spain Cervantes. Rabelais and La Fontaine are recorded by their countrymen to have been *reveurs*. Few men have been graver than Pascal; few have been wittier.

SALOMON.

It is indeed a remarkable thing that such should be the case among the moderns: it does not appear to have been so among the ancients.

ALFIERI.

I differ from you, M. Salomon. When we turn toward the Athenians, we find many comic writers, but few facetious. Menander, if we may judge from his fragments, had less humour than Socrates, and Aristophanes himself than Phocion. Quintilian says of Demosthenes, non displicuisse illi jocos sed non contigisse. In this he was much less fortunate than Phocion and Cicero. Facility in making men smile occasionally gives a natural air to a great orator, and adds thereby much effect

to what he says, provided it come discreetly. It is in him somewhat like affability in a prince; excellent, if used with caution. Every one must have perceived how frequently those are brought over by a touch of humour, who have resisted the force of argument and entreaty. Cicero thought in this manner on wit. Writing to his brother, he mentions a letter from him, *Aristophanico modo, valde mehercule et suavem et gravem.* Among the Romans, the gravest of nations after the English, I think Cicero and Catullus were the wittiest. The former, from his habits of life and studies, must have been grave; and the latter we may believe to have been so, from his being tender and impassioned in the more serious part of his poetry.

SALOMON.

This to me is no proof; for the most tender and impassioned of all poets is Shakespear, who certainly was himself far removed from gravity, however much of it he imparted to some personages of his drama.

ALFIERI.

That Shakespear was gay and pleasurable in conversation I can easily admitt; for there never was a mind at once so plastic and so pliant; but, without much gravity, could there have been that

potency and comprehensiveness of thought, that depth of feeling, that creation of imperishable ideas, that sojourn in the souls of other men? He was amused in his workshop; such was society: but when he left it, he meditated most intensely upon those limbs and muscles on which he was about to bestow new action, grace, and majesty; and so great an intensity of meditation must have strongly impressed his whole character.

SALOMON.

You will however allow that we have no proof of gravity in Horace or Plautus.

ALFIERI.

On the contrary I think we have many. Horace, like all the pusillanimous, was malignant: like all courtiers, he yielded to the temper of his masters. His lighter touches were agreeable less to his own nature than to the nature of Augustus and Mecenas, both of them fond of trifling; but in his Odes and his Discourses there is more of gravity than of gaiety. That he was libidinous is no proof that he was playful; for often such men are even melancholic.

Plautus, rich in language, rich in reflexion, rich in character, rich in humour, is oftener grave than could have suited the inclinations of a coarse and tumultuous populace. What but the

strong bent of his nature could have moved him to it?

SALOMON.

The French are witty.

ALFIERI.

This I concede to them; and no person will accuse me of partiality in their favour. They are witty; and when they discover a witty thing, they value it so highly, that they reserve it for the noblest purposes, such as tragedies, sermons, and funeral orations. Whenever a king of theirs is inaugurated at Rheims, a string of witty things is prepared for him during his whole reign, regularly as the civil list; regularly as menageries, oratories, orangeries, wife, confessor, waterworks, fireworks, gardens, parks, forests, and chases. Sometimes one is put into his mouth when he is too empty, sometimes when he is too full; but he always hath his due portion, take it when or how he may. A decent one, somewhat less indeed than that of their sovran, is reserved for the princes of the blood; the greater part of which is usually packed up with their camp-equipage; and I have seen a label to a *bon mot*, on which was written, *Brillant comme la reponse de Henri IV, quand...*

We Italians sometimes fall into what, if you will not call them witticisms, you may call the

plasma of witticisms, upon their ground, by mere mistake, and against our genius. Reading in a gazette, *Hier le roi a travaillé avec ses ministres*, and knowing the man's character, a young courtier cried innocently, *What! his Most Christian Majesty condescends to dine with his subjects! and they joke upon it!* In another, *Les enfans de France se promenent en carosse, &c.*, his sister enquired of her confessor how many there were of them: he answered *Twenty-four or twenty-five millions.* A blunder, by its very stumbling, is often carried a little beyond the plain sense that was aimed at, and falls upon something which, if it be not wit, is invested with its qualities and powers.

SALOMON.

I have had occasion to observe the obtuseness of the Tuscans in particular on these matters. Lately I lent my Moliere to a man of talents, and when he returned the volumes, I asked him how he liked them: *Per Bacco*, he exclamed, *the names are very comical, Sganarelli, and those others.* They who have no wit of their own, are ignorant of it when it occurs, mistake it, and misapply it. A sailor found upon the shore a piece of amber, too large to be put into his jacket. He carried it home under his arm, and, as he was fond of fiddling, began to rubb it across the strings of

his violin. It would not serve. He then broke some pieces off, boiled them in blacking, and found to his surprise and disquiet that it gave no fresh lustre to the shoe. *What are you about?* cried a messmate ... *smell it, man; it is amber. The devil take it*, cried the finder, *I fancied it was rosin*, and he threw it into the sea. We despise what we cannot use.

ALFIERI.

Your observations on Italian wit are correct. Even our comedies are declamatory: long speeches and inverted sentences overlay and stifle the elasticity of humour. The great Machiavelli is, whatever M. de Voltaire may assert to the contrary, a coarse comedian; hardly better than the cardinal Bibiena, poisoned by the Holiness of our Lord, pope Leo, for wearying him with wit*.

* If Cardinal Bibiena was poisoned by Leo, an opinion to which the profligacy of the pope gave rise, and the malignity of men reception, it should be recorded in justice to his Holiness that he wished to protect the family. I find among the letters of Bembo a very beautiful and energetic one, written in the name of Leo to Francis I. There is something not unsuspicious in the mode of expression. He repeats that, altho Bibiena thinks himself sure of dying, *there appears to be no immediate danger ... if it should happen, &c.* I collect below the similar expressions.

Cum Bernardus Bibiena cardinalis aliquot jam dies ex

SALOMON.

His Holiness took afterwards a stirrup-cup of the same brewery, and never had committed the same offence, poor man!

stomacho laboret, *magisque timore quodam suo quam morbi vi urgente,* brevi se existimet moriturum... Quanquam enim nihildum sanè video, quo quidem de illius vitâ sit omnino magnopere timendum... Yet he goes on rather less securely... Si id accidat quod ipse *suspicatur,* tua in illum munificentia tuumque præclarum munus non statim neque unà cum ipsius vitâ extinguatur, præsertim cum ei tam breve temporis spatium illo ipso tuo munere frui licuerit, ut ante amissum videri possit quam quale quantumve fuerit percipi ab illo cognoscive potuerit... Ut ipse, si moriendum ei sit, &c.

The Italians are too credulous on poison, which at one period was almost a natural death among them. Englishmen were shocked at the confidence with which they asserted it of two personages, who occupied in the world a rank and interest due to neither, and one of whom died in England, the other in her dependencies.

The last words of the letter make me an unbeliever of Leo's guilt in this business. What exquisite language! what expressions of zeal and sincerity!

Quæ quidem omnia non tam propterea colligo, quod non illud unum existimem apud te plurimum valiturum, amorem scilicet erga illum tuum, itemque incredibilem ipsius in te cultum, quod initio dixi, sed ut mihi ipsi, qui id magnopere cupio, satisfaciam; ne perfamiliari ac pernecessario meo, mihique charissimo ac suavissimo atque in omni vitæ munere probatissimo, mea benevolentia meusque amor hoc extremo ejus vitæ tempore, si hoc extremum erit, plane defuisse videatur.

ALFIERI.

It is absurd to argue with a Frenchman on any thing relating to harmony, particularly in verse.

In the tenth book of these epistles there is one addressed to the cardinal, by which the church of Loretto is placed under his care, with every mark of friendship and partiality.

De tuâ enim in Divam pietate, in rem Romanam studio, in me autem, cui quidem familiæque meæ omnia pæne usque a puero summæ cum integritatis et fidei, tum vero curæ atque diligentiæ egregia atque præclara officia præstitisti, perveteri observantiâ voluntateque admonitus, nihil est rerum omnium quod tibi recte mandari credique posse non existimem.

It is not in human nature, I think, that a man ever capable of these feelings toward any one, should poison him afterwards, when no powerful interest or deep revenge was to be gratified: the opinion nevertheless has prevailed; and I attribute it to a person not altogether free from malignity, a scorner of popes and princes, and especially hostile to the Mediceân family.

Paolo Giovio says that Bibiena was poisoned in a *fresh egg*. The sixteenth century was *the age of poison*. Bibiena was poisoned, we may believe; not however by Leo, who loved him as having been his preceptor. Leo sent him into France to persuade Francis I to enter into a league against the Turks. The object of this league was, to divert both him and Charles V from Italy, and to give the preponderating power in it to the family of Medici. It cannot then be wondered at, that both he and his master were removed as quietly as possible: for the Italians have always had less aversion to be ruled by a stranger than by a native. The Florentines were longer quiet, and more so, under the tyrannical duke of Athens, than under their fellow citizens, the milder Medici.

The Spaniards have no palate, the Italians no scent, the French no ear. Garlic and grease and the most nauseous of pulse, are the favorite cheer of the Spaniard; the olfactory nerves of the Italian endure any thing but odoriferous flowers and essences; and no sounds but soft ones offend the Frenchman.

SALOMON.

And yet several of the French prose-writers are more harmonious than the best of ours.

ALFIERI.

In the construction of their sentences they have obtained from study what Sensibility has denied them. Rousseau is an exception: he besides is the only musical man that ever had a tolerable ear for prose-composition. Music is both sunshine and irrigation to the mind: but when it occupies and covers it too long, it debilitates and corrupts it. Sometimes I have absorbed music so totally, that nothing was left of it in its own form: my ear detained none of the notes, none of the melody: they went into the heart immediately, mingled with the spirit, and lost themselves among the operations of the fancy, whose finest and most recondite springs they put simultaneously and vigorously in motion. Rousseau is the only composer of music, on the modern system, who could write one

sentence of poetry or prose worth reading. He kept it subordinate; which must always be done with music as well as with musicians. He excels all the moderns in the harmony of his periods: Bossuet comes next.

SALOMON.

I have heard it reported that you preferr Pascal.

ALFIERI.

Certainly on the whole I consider him as the most perfect of writers. How deplorable, that whatever is excellent in modern style, should, with hardly any deduction, be displayed by Fanaticism! I am little more interested by the contentions of such men as Pascal and Bossuet with their opponents, than I am by the *Cristo Bianco* and *Cristo Nero* of the Neapolitan rabble.. two processional idols, you must know, which are regularly carried home with broken heads.

SALOMON.

I dare not hazard a word upon these worthies. You, who had a catholic father, and whose blood is truly christian, may ridicule them with impunity: the people who would laugh with you, would stone me. Our incurable diarrhea of words should not always make you take the other side of the road. Machiavelli is admirable for precision of style, no less than for acuteness of argument and

depth of thought. Guicciardini, if his sentences were properly stopt, would be found in general both full and concise, whatever may be asserted to the contrary by the fastidious and inattentive.

ALFIERI.

I have often thought the same. As for Machiavelli, I would rather have written his *Discourses on the first Decade of Livius* (in which nothing is amiss but the title) than all the volumes, prose and poetry, of Voltaire. If his *Florentine History* is not so interesting as the more general one of Guicciardini, there is the same reason for it as there is that the Batrachomyomachia is not so interesting as the Iliad.

SALOMON.

Certainly no race of men upon earth ever was so unwarlike, so indifferent to national dignity and to personal honour, as the Florentines: yet, in those days at least, a certain pride, arising from a resemblance in their government to that of Athens, excited a vivifying desire of approximation, where no danger or loss accompanied it; and Genius was not less confident of his security than of his power. Look from the window. That cottage on the declivity was Dante's: that square and large mansion, with a circular garden before it, elevated artificially, was the scene of Boccaccio's Decameron.

A boy might stand at an equal distance between them, and break the windows of each with his sling. What idle fabricator of crazy systems will tell me that Climate is the creator of Genius? The climate of Austria is more regular and more temperate than ours, which I am inclined to believe is the most variable in the whole universe, subject, as you have perceived, to heavy fogs for two months in winter, and to a stifling heat, concentrated within the hills, for five more. Yet, while a single man of talents has never appeared in the whole extent of Austria, an extent several thousand times greater than our city, this very street has given birth to fifty.

ALFIERI.

Since the destruction of the republic, Florence has produced only one great man, Galileo, and abandoned him to every indignity that fanaticism and despotism could invent. Extraordinary men, like the stones that are formed in the higher regions of the air, fall upon the earth only to be broken, and cast into the furnace. The precursor of Newton lived in the deserts of the moral world, drank water, and ate locusts and wild honey. It is fortunate that his head also was not lopt off: had a singer asked it, instead of a dancer, it would have been.

SALOMON.

In fact it was so : for the fruits of it were shaken down and thrown away. He was forbidden to publish the most important of his discoveries, and the better part of his manuscripts was burnt after his death.

ALFIERI.

Yes, Mr. Salomon, those things may rather be called our heads than this knob above the shoulder, of which (as matters stand) we are rather the porters than the proprietors, and which is really the joint concern of barber and dentist.

SALOMON.

Our thoughts, if they may not rest at home, may wander freely. Delighting in the remoter glories of my native city, I forget at times its humiliation and ignominy. A town so little, that the voice of a cabbage-girl in the midst of it may be heard at the extremities, reared within three centuries a greater number of citizens illustrious for their genius, than all the remainder of the continent, excepting her sister Athens, in six thousand years. My ignorance of the greek forbids me to compare our Dante with Homer. The propriety and force of language and the harmony of verse, in the glorious Grecian, are quite lost to me. Dante had not only to compose a poem, but in

great part a language. Fantastical as the plan of his poem is, and, I will add, uninteresting and uninviting; unimportant, mean, contemptible, as are nine-tenths of his heros and his details; there are more thoughts highly poetical, there is more reflexion, more feeling, and the nobler properties of mind and intellect are brought into more intense action, than in the Iliad: nor do I think (I must here also speak with hesitation) that any one drama of Shakespear contains so many. Smile as you will, Signor Conte: what must I think of a city, where Michel-Angelo, Frate Bartolomeo, Ghiberti (who formed them), Guicciardini, and Boccaccio himself, were secondary men? and certainly such were they, if we compare them with Galileo and Dante.

ALFIERI.

I smiled from pure delight, which I rarely do: for I take an interest deep and vital in such men, and in those who appreciate them rightly and praise them unreservedly. These are my fellow citizens: I acknowledge no other: we are of the same tribe, of the same household: I bow to them as being older than myself, and I love them as being better.

SALOMON.

Let us hope that our Italy is not yet effete.

Filangieri died but lately: what think you of him?

ALFIERI.

If it were possible that I could ever see his statue in a square at Constantinople, tho I should be scourged for an idolater, I would kiss the pedestal.

Indignation and contempt may be expressed in other poems than such as are usually called satires. Filicaia, in his celebrated address to Italy, steers a middle course.

SALOMON.

True, he is neither indignant nor contemptuous: but the verses of Michel-Angelo would serve rather for an example, added to which they are much better.

ALFIERI.

In fact the former part of Filicaia's is verbose and confused: let us analyse them.

> Italia, Italia, o tu cui *die'* la sorte
> *Dono* infelice di bellezza, onde hai
> Funesta *dote* d' infiniti guai,
> Che in fronte scritti *per gran doglia* porti.

Fate gives the *gift*, and this *gift* gives the dowery, which dowery consists of infinite *griefs*, and these griefs Italy carries written on her brow, through great *sorrow!*

Deh, fosti tu *men* bella o *almen* più forte!

Men and *almen* sound wretchedly: he might have writen *oppur* *. There are those who would persuade us that verbal criticism is unfair, and that few poems can stand it. The truth of the latter assertion by no means establishes the former: all good criticism hath its foundation on verbal. Long dissertations are often denominated criticisms, without one analysis; instead of which it is thought enough to say; *There is nothing finer in our language... we can safely recommend... imbued with the true spirit... destined to immortality*, &c.

A perfect piece of criticism must shew *where* a work is good, or bad; *why* it is good, or bad; in what degree it is good, or bad; must also shew in

* There is another sonnet of Filicaia *to Italy*, remarkable for identity of sound in four correspondent closes.

Dov' è, Italia, il tuo braccio? e a che ti *servi*
Tu dell' altrui? Non è, se io scorgo il vero,
Di chi ti offende il difensor men fero..
Ambi nemici sono: ambi fur *servi*.
Così dunque l' onor, così con*servi*
Gli avanzi tu del glorioso impero?
Così al valor, così al valor primiero
(Che a te fede giurò) la fede os*servi*?

what manner and to what extent the same ideas or reflexions have come to others, and, if they be cloathed in poetry, why, by an apparently slight variation, what in one author is mediocrity, in another is excellence. I have never seen a critic, I do not say of Florence or of Pisa, but of Milan or Bologna, where letters are cultivated with more assiduity and success, who did not commend and admire the sonnet of Cassiani on the rape of Proserpine, without a suspicion of its manifold and grave defects. Few sonnets are indeed so good; but if we examine it attentively, we shall discover its flaws and patches.

> Die' un alto strido, gittò i fiori, e volta
> All' improvisa *mano* che la *cinse*,
> Tutta in se *per la tema onde fù colta*
> La Siciliana vergine si strinse.

The *hand* is inadequate to embrace a body: *strinse*, which comes after, would have done better. The two last verses tell only what the two first had told; and feebly; nothing can be more so than the *tema onde fù colta*.

> Il nero dio la calda bocca involta
> D'ispido pelo a ingordo bacio spinse,
> E di stigia fuligin con la folta
> Barba l'eburnea gola *e il sen le tinse*.

Does not this describe the devils of our carneval, rather than the majestic brother of Jupiter, at whose side, upon asphodel and amaranth, the sweet Persephone sits pensively contented, in that deep motionless quiet, which mortals pity and which the Gods enjoy; rather than him who, under the umbrage of Elysium, gazes at once upon all the beauties that on earth were separated by times and countries.. Helena and Eriphyle, Polyxena and Hermione, Deidamia and Deianira, Leda and Omphale, Atalanta and Cydippe, Laodamia, with her arm around the neck of a fond youth, whom she still seems afraid of losing, and apart, the daughters of Niobe, tho now in smiles, still clinging to their parent; and many thousands more, each of whom is worth the dominions, once envied, of both his brothers?

SALOMON.

These images are better than satires; but continue, in preference to all other thoughts or pursuits, the noble career you have entered. Be contented, Signor Conte, with the glory of our first great dramatist, and neglect altogether any inferior one. Why vex and torment yourself about the French? They buzz and are troublesome while they are swarming; but the master will soon

hive them. Is the whole nation worth the worst of your tragedies? All the present race of them, all the creatures in the world which excite your indignation, will lie in the grave, while young and old are clapping their hands or beating their bosoms at your *Bruto Primo*. Consider, to make one step further, that kings and emperors should in your estimation be but as grasshoppers and beetles: let them consume a few blades of your clover, without molesting them, without bringing them to crawl on you and claw you. The difference between them and men of genius, is almost as great as between men of genius and those higher Intelligences, who act in immediate subordination to the Almighty. Yes, I assert it, without flattery and without fear, the Angels are not higher above mortals, than you are above the proudest that trample on them.

ALFIERI.

I believe, sir, you were the first in commending my tragedies.

SALOMON.

He who first praises a good book becomingly is next in merit to the author.

ALFIERI.

As a writer and as a man I know my station:

if I found in the world five equal to myself, I would walk out of it, not to be jostled.

I must now, Signor Salomon, take my leave of you; for his Eminence my coachman and their Excellencies my horses are waiting.

CONVERSATION XIV.

LOPEZ BAÑOS

AND

ROMERO ALPUENTE.

LOPEZ BAÑOS

AND

ROMERO ALPUENTE.

BANOS.

At length, Alpuente, the saints of the holy alliance have declared war against us.

ALPUENTE.

I have not heard it until now.

BANOS.

They have directed a memorial to the King of France, inviting him to take such measures as his Majesty in his wisdom shall deem convenient, in order to avert the calamities of war and the danger of discord from his frontier.

ALPUENTE.

God forbid that so great a king should fall upon us! O Lord, save us from our enemy, who would eat us up quick, so despitefully and hungrily is he set against us.

BAÑOS.

Read the manifesto... why do you laugh? is not this a declaration of hostilities?

ALPUENTE.

To Spaniards, yes. I laughed at the folly and impudence of men, who, for the present of a tobacco-box with a fool's head upon it, string together these old peeled pearls of diplomatic eloquence, and foist them upon the world as arguments and truths. Do kings imagine that they can as easily deceive as they can enslave? and that the mind is as much under their snaffle, as the body is under their axe and halter? Shew me one of them, Lopez, who has not violated some promise, who has not usurped some territory, who has not oppressed and subjugated some neighbour: then I will believe him, then I will obey him, then I will acknowledge that those literary heralds who trumpet forth his praises with the newspaper in their hands, are creditable and upright and uncorrupted. The courage of Spain delivered these wretches from the cane and drum-head of a Corsican: which of them did not crouch before him? which did not flatter him? which did not execute his orders? which did not court his protection? which did not solicit his favour? which did not entreat his forbearance? which did not implore his pardon?

which did not abandon and betray him? No ties either of blood or of religion led or restrained these neophytes in holiness. And now forsooth the calamities of war and the dangers of discord are to be averted, by arming one part of our countrymen against the other, by stationing a military force on our frontier, for the reception of murderers and traitors and incendiaries, and by pointing the bayonet and cannon in our faces. When we smiled at the insults of a beaten enemy, they dictated terms and conditions. At last his *most christian majesty* tells his army, that the nephew of Henry the fourth shall march against us... with his feather.

BAÑOS.

Ah! that weighs more. The French army will march over fields which cover French armies, and over which the oldest and bravest part of it fled in ignominy and dismay, before our shepherd-boys and hunters. What the veterans of Napoleon failed to execute the household of Louis will accomplish. Parisians! let your comic-opera-house lie among its ruins; it cannot be wanted this season. I trust in heaven, that, whoever leads them, will find an abler in the leader of ours. Upon the summit of the Pyrenees, in the *Seo de Urgel*, is stationed the vigilant and indefatigable Mina. Among all the generals of the various

nations, that have come forward in our days on the same theatre of war, he is the only one who never lost a good opportunity of fighting, or seized a bad one. Others, the best and most celebrated, with strings about them thicker-set than the braces of their drums, have been so astonished at the magnitude of their victories, that they could give us no account of them; and (what is worse) have persecuted with hatred the memory of the generals to whom principally these victories were owing. Mina gained them, even when his escape from surrounding armies was deemed impossible, and he seems to think every soldier in his a part of himself. Others, when they have ceased to command, deem it famous to excell the youngest officer in feats of licentiousness. Mina is abstinent from all light pleasures, knowing that he who is most reverenced is best obeyed. Others trip from title upon title, and stoop to pick up pension after pension. Mina is contented with the name of Mina; and the fare of a soldier satisfies him as completelv as the fame.

Little is that, O Lopez, which any man can give us: that which we can give ourselves is infinitely great. This of all truths, when acted upon consistently, is the most important to our happiness and glory; and I know not whether by ignorance

or deceit it has been kept so long a secret from mankind.

I now have time to think for a moment on the troops which, you tell me, are coming against us.

ALPUENTE.

What! shall those battalions which fought so many years for freedom, so many for glory, be supplementary bands to barbarians from Caucasus and Imaus? shall they shed the remainder of their blood to destroy a cause, for the maintenance of which they offered up its first libation? Time will solve this problem, the most momentous in its solution that ever lay before man. One would imagine that those who invented the story of Prometheus, were gifted with the spirit of prophecy, announcing how human genius was, in process of time, to be chained for ever to the Scythian rock. Incredible is it, nevertheless, that a barbarian enthroned upon it, should dictate his ravings to all nations! a madman whose father was suffocated in his bed for less mischievous insanity. If we are conquered, of which at present I have no apprehension, Europe must become the theatre of new wars, and be divided first into three parts, afterwards into two; and the next generation will see all her states and provinces the property of one autocrat, and governed by the most ignorant and lawless of her nations.

BAÑOS.

We Spaniards are accused of republicanism. The falsehood of this accusation is evinced by the plain acknowledged fact, that, when we could have established a republic, we declined it. On the contrary, we were persecutors, I am ashamed to say it, of those who first were liberal amongst us, and who believed (for the wretchedness of our condition led them thus far into credulity) that Bonaparte would be the deliverer of Spain. Every man amongst us, who was inclined to republicanism, was inclined to France; and these were objects of hatred to our new government. The great favourers of republicanism are the kings themselves; who now demonstrate to the world that no trust or confidence is to be reposed in them; and who have at all times shewn a disposition to push their prerogative deep into the constitution of their states... not to mention, as aiding in the furtherance of the cause, the frugality and fairness of those governments which are without those hard excrescences called kings. He of France is acknowledged to be a virtuous one: let us consider him so. Yet he lies in the face of the universe: he declares he has no intention of attacking us, and without any change in our conduct, he attacks.

ALPUENTE.

He perhaps is a virtuous and consistent king:

yet when the pictures and statues at Paris were demanded back, he told Canova that he might indeed take those of his master, the pope, but desired him to bear in mind that it was without *his* consent. Now these things were restored to their old possessors, by the same means and on the same principles as his throne was restored to him.

He perhaps is a virtuous and consistent king: yet he refused the payment of debts, contracted by him when he was not one, on pretext of an obsolete law.

BANOS.

You would make him out, Alpuente, a most detestable rogue; as vile and worthless as another king of the same family, who exacted eighty-two thousand crowns, for his private purse, before he would sign a contract, for furnishing with provisions the foren troops that held him tight upon his throne; saying, *I too must have oil for my macaroni.*

ALPUENTE.

So far am I from wishing to point him out as a bad king, that I acknowledge I believe him to be among the best now living; yet certainly there is nothing in him to render us the more enamoured of royalty, or the more attached to the family of Bourbon. A pink orbicular good-dinner face, after

praising the Lord of Hosts for his capons and oysters, beseeches him in his mercy and loving-kindness, to lift a little his flaming sword over Spain, in defence of kings and faith; and then, in full confidence of the Lord's righteousness, orders out an army to assist him in the enterprise, and falls fast asleep. Was the people of Spain, then, grown more idle? more vicious? Was it revolt that threw us into wretchedness? or (if the question is a lawful one) was it wretchedness that threw us into revolt?

BAÑOS.

The king of France can answer this, and will answer it one day, if God is what he acknowledges he believes he is.

Our nation was beginning to flourish: the privileged orders had become reconciled to Justice, and the lower had begun to experience her protection, when a neighbouring king, by distributing arms and money, by promising aid, protection, and honours, excited the ignorant and necessitous to insurrection and treason. And what king was this? one whom treason and insurrection had twice driven from his throne. Neither he nor any else could be unaware what calamities must ensue, if his plan succeded; and that the bravest, the most enlightened, the most virtuous of Spaniards, would

be imprisoned, impoverished, exiled, murdered, to exalt the most cowardly, the most bigoted, the most perfidious, the most ungrateful; a wretch whom his father had cursed, whom his mother had disowned, and whom the nation he betrayed and degraded had... forgiven!

The most christian king invades us, that a limited power, in every act beneficent to the people, and employed by the magistrates with such clemency and discretion, as History in like circumstances never hath recorded, should be wrested from those who hold it by the choice and order of their fellow citizens, and be transferred without bond or restriction, to one who had usurped it from his parent, who had betrayed it to his enemy, and who never had exerted it, a single hour, but to the detriment and dishonour of his people. I do not condole with you, Alpuente, on what is ordinary; that even constitutional kings abandoned and deceived us; and that Equity and Policy were disarmed by solicitation and falsehood. Nations are never aided by princes; not even when those princes, as far as the common eye can follow them, have walked in the paths of rectitude thro life; and the worst of their fraternity have always been succoured more zealously than the best. With such men it is easier for neighbouring Powers to

make favorable treaties, and for intriguers to raise large fortunes.

ALPUENTE.

It appears to be resolved by every prince in Europe, that their counsels, administrations, and systems, shall henceforward be the same throughout.

BAÑOS.

To condemn then tens of thousands to want, imprisonment, death, exile, insult, (I bring before you these calamities in the order we Spaniards feel them) hundreds of thousands to loss of property, loss of relatives, loss of friends; millions to barbarism*; all to degradation! Men, the produce of

* What a change within three months after the composition of this dialogue! Every man in Spain who has laid before his fellow citizens the riper and richer fruits of education, every man who has made a sacrifice to the public good, is marked out for priestly and for royal vengeance. Fewer families in the same period were reduced to misery in France by the tyranny of Robespierre, than in Spain by the aggression of Louis. Restoring his relative to despotic power, he might at least have stipulated against his inordinate and wanton love of bloodshed, and have placed some barrier, some boundary, some imaginary line at least, and visible horizon, to the insensate fury of his bigotry and revenge. It is known that upward of one hundred and seventy thousand persons have either been imprisoned, driven from their houses, placed under

reir soil, and formerly honoured by the appellation
f the flocks, are now considered more like their

ıe arbitrary power of the police, or deprived of their occu-
ıtions and livelihood, since the departure of Ferdinand from
adiz. So much of wretchedness has never been occasioned
y any one man within so short a time, to so many of the
rave, the industrious, and the virtuous. The nineteenth cen-
ury is now thrown back upon the sixteenth. Where there is
ıe same oppression, there will be the same resistence: where
ıere is the same cruelty, there will be exerted the same
ıergy to extinguish it.

Deplorable! that Virtue must assume the attitude of De-
pair: that bad actions must remove bad men: that Justice
ıust use in her defence the weapon she hath wrested from
ıe criminal? Shall Spain quite abandon her first friends?
er earliest defenders? and console and content herself, that
e most atrocious of parricides and of tyrants is unable to add
e monster more to his detested race?

Where art thou, Riego! abandoning, to preserve thy coun-
, the most beloved and tender of women, in the first hour
ınion. Upon what mountain-crag rests thy devoted head!
p what parental breast can hers repose! O blessed
ger of insulted Freedom! And thou, Quiroga! where is
egion of thy wanderings? Must thou ponder and pore
the vestiges of gratitude, in lands across the Atlantic?
not Spaniards bear toward thee eternally the love and
ıtion that the rudest once of Columbian tribes bear still
i their father Vasco*? In the islet of Pascuaro rest
ıes; art thou among those who weep over them? En-
iis repose, art thou doubtful of participating his glory?

ısco de Quiroga, first bishop of Michuacan, was justly called so.

grapes and olives, good for nothing until trodden upon and prest. They talk about order: what order is there, where one man is in place of all? They talk about civilization: what civilization is there, where there is imposed on the citizen not only that which he shall do and forbear, but that which he shall believe? They talk of law: what law is there, where a failure in belief is subject to a severer penalty than a failure in performance or forbearance?

Thus familiar and sportive with absurdity are Cruelty and Injustice!

Never was there a revolution, or material change in government, effected with so little bloodshed, so little opposition, so little sorrow or disquietude, as ours. Months had passed away, years were rolling over us, institutions were consolidating, superstition was relaxing, ingratitude and perfidy were as much forgotten by us, as our services and sufferings were forgotten by Ferdinand, when emissaries and gold and arms, and *Faith*, inciting to discord and rebellion, crossed our frontier. The religion of Constantine and of Charlemagne, falsely called the christian, and subversive of its doctrines and its benefits, roused brother against brother, son against father, and our fortresses were garnished with the bayonets of France, and echoed

with the watchwords of the Vatican. The name of God has always been invoked when any great violence or injustice was to be perpetrated. No fatal blow against the liberties of mankind or against the tranquillity of nations hath ever been aimed without religion. Even the son of Tarquin, the violator of whatever is most dear in domestic and civil life, on invading his country, called upon the Gods to avenge the cause of kings*. If Ferdinand had regarded his oath, and had acceded, in *our* sense of the word *faith*, to the constitution of his country, from which there hardly was a dissentient voice, among the industrious and the unambitious, among the peaceable and the wise, would he have eaten one dinner with less appetite, or have embroidered one petticoat with less taste? would the saints along his chapel-walls have smiled upon him less graciously, or would thy tooth, holy Dominic, have left a less pleasurable impression on his lips? Only two strong truths could have shocked him, instead of the many personal ones he drew upon his head; namely, that *damnable* does not mean *combustible*, and that *there* is the worst heresy where is imposture for the sake of power or profit. Such truths however are now, it appears,

* Dii regum ultores adeste! Liv. 11. 6.

to be bundled up with gorse, broom, and hazel; and he who exposed the mysteries of the Inquisition, may soon be a prisoner in its lowest chambers, having been expelled from the territory, as might be expected, of the most christian king. His most christian majesty demands, *that Ferdinand the seventh may give his people those institutions which they can have from him only.* Yes, these are his expressions, Alpuente; these the doctrines for the propagation of which our country is to be invaded with fire and sword; this is government, this is order, this is faith! Ferdinand *was* at liberty to give us his institutions: he gave them: what were they? the inquisition in all its terrors, absolute and arbitrary sway, scourges and processions, monks and missionaries, and a tooth of saint Dominic to crown them all. Our priests are more powerful than God himself. So strange and intractable a creature was man, not only when he was made but when he was making, that God rested himself immediately after the operation: now, Señor, here comes before you, from Astorga or Las Herreras, a clever young prig of a priestling, puts a wafer into a watchcase, lifts it up half an ell above the louse-roost, and, by the body of Saint Iago, out come a brace or leash of Gods created at a word, and astart at the tinkling of a

bell, in half the time in which the old one made his granfather. To support the throne that crushes us, and the altar that choaks us, march forward the warlike Louis and the preux Chateaubriant, known among his friends to be firm in belief, as Hobbes, Talleyrand, or Spinoza; and behold them advancing side by side against the calm opponents of Roman bulls and French charters. The French minister has given to his private friends a strange reason for going to war with us. He tells them he must either fight in Spain or on the Rhine. He was provoked then, not by the man before him, but by the man behind, and fairly kicked into courage. A brave citizen or brave nation resents a threat above an injury. Here neither was injury nor threat from us: they came from behind the scenes and beneath the lamps, from manager and prompter. Under the administration of this whining fox, more than thirty slave-vessels sailed from the port of Nantes only; all armed; all equipped with chains and instruments of torture. If he was ignorant of this, he was little fit to be minister: if he knew it, he was less so. Often as he dips into letters, will he never come up again with a filament of dialectics, or a grain of undirty reasoning, on some part of him?

Altho his majesty be brave as Maximin at a breakfast, he will find it easier to eat his sixtyfour cutlets than to conquer Spain. I doubt whether the same historian shall have to commemorate both exploits.

ALPUENTE.

An imprudent step, amidst armies raised for the defence of other principles, may be ruinous to his dynasty.

BAÑOS.

Principles do not much influence the unprincipled, or mainly the principled. We talk on principle, but we act on interest. The French army will find little plunder; and the French people must endure new taxes and impositions. A Spanish war may precipitate Louis XVIII where an American war dragged in its consequences Louis XVI, to a fate which, if he had not experienced it, he would be acknowledged to have deserved. One rule is to be followed in all such revolutions as ours. I could lay it down plainly to you; but were I speaking to others, I would deliver it in the form of apologue, in some such manner as this.

Two dogs were fighting for a bone: other dogs ran from the vicinity to take part in the quarrel. A beneficent man tossed the bone with his stick

over the wall. As nothing now was to be fought for, the high belligerents parted: the others hurried back again, and quarreled among themselves, until their masters whipped them soundly and kenneled them.

At the first barking you hear, remove the bone.

ALPUENTE.

In wars the least guilty are the sufferers. In these, as in every thing, we should contract as much as possible the circle of human misery. The deluded and enslaved should be so far spared as is consistent with security: the most atrocious of murderers and incendiaries, the purveyors and hirers of them, should be removed at any expense or hazard. If we shew little mercy to the robber who enters a house by force, and if less ought to be shewn to him who should enter it in the season of distress and desolation, what portion of it ought to be extended toward those who assail every house in our country? How much of crime and wretchedness may often be averted, how many years of tranquility may sometimes be ensured to the world, by one wellchosen example! Is it not better than to witness the grief of the virtuous for the virtuous, and the extinction of those bright and lofty hopes, for which the best and wisest of

every age contended? Where is the man, worthy of the name, who would be less affected at the lamentation of one mother for her son, slain in defending his country, than at the extermination of some six or seven usurpers, commanding or attempting its invasion? National safety legitimates every mean employed upon it. Criminals have been punished differently in different countries: but all enlightened, all honest, all civilized men, must agree *who* are criminals. The Athenians were perhaps as well-informed and intelligent as the people on lake Ladoga: they knew nothing of the knout, I confess, and no family among them boasted a succession of assassins, in wives, sons, fathers, and husbands; but he who endangered or injured his country was condemned to the draught of hemlock. They could punish the offence in another manner: if any nation cannot, shall that nation therefor leave it unpunished? and shall the guiltiest of men enjoy impunity from a consideration of modes and means? Justice is not to be neglected because what is preferable is unattainable. A housebreaker is condemned to die: a city-breaker is celebrated by an inscription over the gate. The murder of thousands, soon perpetrated and past, is not the greatest mischief he does: it is followed by the baseness of millions,

deepening for ages. Every virtuous man in the universe is a member of that grand Amphictyonic council, which should pass sentence on the too powerful, and provide that it be duly executed. It is just and it is necessary, that those who pertinaciously insist on an unnatural state of society, should suffer by the shock things make in recovering their equipoise.

BANOS.

We have not hitherto done our utmost, in order to secure the advantages we have obtained. In every revolution, the landed property of the crown and clergy should be divided into parcels. Out of these the creditors of the state should first be paid; afterwards farms and tenements should be allotted to public officers, in place of money, reverting to the government on their dismissal or decease; lastly, the military should also have their part, on condition of serving well and faithfully, a stipulated time, during which they might consign the care and culture of it to their fathers or brothers or confidential friends. Should any such lane be still remaining unappropriated, it ought to be offered for sale, partly in small portions, partly in large; in the former case, that as many as possible be interested in obstructing the return of

despotism; in the latter, that the rich capitalists, who otherwise would be slow in doing it, might be stimulated by avarice, and labour in loose traces for the public good. Whether the full value be paid is unimportant: what we want to do, is to give men an interest in their country. Every village-priest should have an augmentation of revenue from the episcopal tables. No bishop should have more than three thousand crowns yearly, nor ever be permitted to sleep out of his diocese. The whole of his salary should be paid from the treasury; the whole of the priest's should accrue from the land assigned to him. No convent, of males, or females, should be tolerated.

ALPUENTE.

In your assignment of so large a sum as three thousand crowns annually to the bishop, your liberality far outstrips your equity, as I think I can easily and satisfactorily demonstrate to you. Suppose the priest has three hundred: do you believe the bishop is ten times wiser, ten times better, ten times more active? Do you imagine the duty is ten times more difficult in the performance, of regulating the regulated, for such his clergy *should* be, than the other's in regulating the ignorant, as the greater part of his parishioners *must* be?

Then, unless you insist, which no man is less ready to do, that the civil power should be subordinate in weight and dignity to the spiritual, you surely would not allow to the superintendent of few, a larger stipend than to the superintendent of many; and yet, according to your suggestion, a bishop should be paid higher than an alcalde or corregidor: an absurdity so great (pardon me, good Lopez!) nothing but superstition could tolerate, nothing but Despotism could devise. In the country where an archbishop is superior in rank to a colonel, a bishop to a lieutenant-colonel, things have not yet found their just proportions, nor their full and final settlement. The poison may have evaporated or have been poured out, but the vessel is still darkened by the dregs and crust. Enormity of absurdity and abuse! that the inmates of the college and the cloister, whose best and deepest learning are the actions of the just and brave, should, for possessing this knowledge of them, take precedency of those whose actions in the field have been as brave, whose decisions in the courts of judicature have been as just. We truly are less men than they! be it so! but why are we? because we left one with his ear against a girl's lips at the confessional, another at play with St. Augustin, a third asleep in his innocence, and went forth

against the invaders of our country, and brought back with us these scars; marks of ignominy and reprobation!

We may indeed avoid a war if we will adopt the rickety children of our neighbours: if we will only build a house of peers we may live quietly in our own.

BAÑOS.

A peerage I consider as the parkpaling of despotism; arranged to keep in creatures tame and wild for diversion and luxury, and to keep out the people. Peerages are to kings, what poles are to ropedancers, enabling them to play their tricks above the heads of the people with greater confidence and security*. The wisest and the most independent of the English parliaments declared the thing useless. If the opinion of that nation is now favorable to it, let us respect it: but let us also teach that nation to respect ours, always less biassed by private interests and less addicted to party. The principal gods of antiquity had each his favorite tree; and some nations too, the English for example, theirs... the oak. The Spaniard has rather the qualities of the cedar: patient

* This (as must be evident from the Commentary of Judge Blackstone, and from the sermons of many dignitaries of the church) is inapplicable to England.

of cold and heat, nourished on little, lofty and dark, unbending and incorruptible.

Nothing should stand between the nation and the chief magistrate: the laws alone should be checks: a free people can acknowledge no other. In these religion is included, which indeed is the great law-head whence they all emanate. It is written in the heart of every man: but it is often so misspelt as to become a matter of contest, by the notaries that would traffic in transcribing it.

The French, ridiculous as it may appear, would be our teachers. Let us not envy them the facility, with which they build up constitutions and pull them down again, with which they take oaths and counter-oaths, with which while they violate honesty they declame on honour: let us only ask of them, who of their most applauded public men has not been both traitor and perjurer; who among them has not been the deserter of his country or its deluder. Ingratitude, the most odious of crimes in other countries, is not even a blemish there: the sign of the cross laid over the uniform heals it perfectly. Read over the list of marshals: which of them has not abandoned his benefactor? which of them does not drink to the health of Louis from wine poured out to him by Napoleon?

Dignity without pride was formerly the charac-

teristic of greatness: the revolution in morals is completed, and it is now pride without dignity. Republics give commissions for robbery, and despots give keys to secure it; so that every thief, issuing from the foul and slippery allies of politics, is glad to creep under the ermine. Look again at the French marshals, whose heads are now peeping out from it, in quest of fresh plunder! to which of all the number does not my remark apply, even of those whose palms and foreheads are the least deeply branded?

France is strong by the weakness of Spain, in some degree; and the elder branch of the Bourbons has always had the means of inculcating this truth on the younger, and of indemnifying it for its acquiescence: *if your people are flourishing they will be strong; if they are strong they will be turbulent: the richer they are, the poorer will you be. Let them recover their rights, as they call them, and you will lose your mines and your chases.* The most wretched nations make the most splendid kings, as the thinnest rags the most lustrous paper.

ALPUENTE.

England, I trust, will exert her influence and her authority. She loses what France gains.

BANOS.

There are two which you cannot trust at once; Experience and England. As the catholic church holds that faith is not to be kept with heretics, so does the policy of England hold that none is to be kept with nations. On this she has acted of late universally, but most openly and scandalously in her promises to Sicily. In regard to Spain, she seems resolved to adopt the principles of the holy alliance; her king, it is said, has approved them, and has expressed his regret that the Constitution did not permitt him to enter into the confederacy: the first time, I believe, that a king of England has openly regretted the precautions imposed on him, by the constitution which placed his family on the throne. If we should go further than we have done, if we should vote, on proofs of treason, that our king has abdicated his, will England condemn in us what in herself she glorifies? No, England will not condemn us, but her government will abandon us.

ALPUENTE.

Yet at this moment she could obtain from us more than all her wars have given her. By the cession of a fortress, from which she derives no other advantage than the appointment of an old

drowsy governor to about one hundred thousand crowns yearly, she might possess our African harbours, which alone would give her the dominion both of the Atlantic sea and of the Mediterranean: she might also, for other trifling sacrifices, which in the end would strengthen and enrich her, be mistress of that American island which secures and provisions all the others, if well managed, and which gives her advantages, beyond her calculation, in those dreadful conflicts that must decide hereafter whether the mother or the daughter shall be mistress of the seas.

BAÑOS.

Spain once ruled them; England rules them now: Spain was as confident that her supremacy would be eternal as England now is. From the time that we adopted a French family and French principles we began to decay; and it is in vain that purblind politicians seek the germs of our corruption in America. Let us, Alpuente, rather look to that country for regeneration. There the Spaniard shoots up again: there also we perhaps may lay our bones at last.

ALPUENTE.

Eighty years have thrown their burden upon mine: they are not worth the freight. I can still

watch for my country: I can still mount guard. No voice is such an incentive to valour as the feeble voice of age; neither flag nor trumpet marshals it, like a man of eighty dying on his threshold.

"Joseph España perished on the scaffold; and his wife groaned in a prison, because she had given an asylum to her husband when a fugitive, and had not denounced him to the government." *Humboldt's Personal Narrative,* Vol. iii. p. 474.

Cruelty in all countries is the companion of Anger; but there is only one, and never was another on the globe, where she coquets both with Anger and with Mirth. Yet in the revolution of that people, marked by every atrocity for twenty years, if more blood was shed than among the Spaniards, stil there was less suffering within equal periods; for triumphs lightened it. Spain heaves with abject weakness, and writhes under hopeless slavery. Domestic virtues, we see, are political crimes, and imprisonment is the reward of them under Catholic and most Christian kings. Quousque tandem?...

CONVERSATION XV.

LORD CHESTERFIELD

AND

LORD CHATHAM.

LORD CHESTERFIELD

AND

LORD CHATHAM.

CHESTERFIELD.

It is true, my lord, we have not always been of the same opinion, or, to use a better, truer, and more significant expression, of the same *side* in politics; yet I never heard a sentence from your Lordship which I did not listen to with deep attention. I understand that you have written some pieces of admonition and advice to a young relative: they are mentioned as being truly excellent: I wish I could have profited by them when I was composing mine on a similar occasion.

CHATHAM.

My lord, you certainly would not have done it, even supposing they contained, which I am far from believing, any topics that could have escaped your penetrating view of manners and morals: for your Lordship and I set out diversely from the

very threshold. Let us then rather hope that what we both have written, with an equally good intention, may produce its due effect; which indeed, I am afraid, may be almost as doubtful, if we consider how ineffectual were the cares and exhortations, and even the daily example and high renown, of the most zealous and prudent men, on the life and conduct of their children and disciples. Let us however hope the best rather than fear the worst, and believe that there never was a right thing done or a wise one spoken in vain, altho the fruit of them may not spring up in the place designated or at the time expected.

CHESTERFIELD.

Pray, if I am not taking too great a freedom, give me the outline of your plan.

CHATHAM.

Willingly, my lord: but since a greater man than either of us has laid down a more comprehensive one, containing all I could bring forward, would it not be preferable to consult it? I differ in nothing from Locke, unless it be that I would recommend the lighter as well as the graver part of the ancient classics, and the constant practise of imitating them in early youth. This is no change in the system, and no larger an addition than a woodbine to a sacred grove.

CHESTERFIELD.

I do not admire Mr. Locke.

CHATHAM.

Nor I.: he is too simply grand for admiration: I contemplate and revere him. Equally deep and clear, he is both philosophically and grammatically the most elegant of English writers.

CHESTERFIELD.

If I expressed by any motion of limb or feature my surprise at this remark, your Lordship I hope will pardon me a slight and involuntary transgression of my own precept. I must entreat you, before we move a step further in our inquiry, to inform me whether I am really to consider him, in style, the most elegant of our prose authors.

CHATHAM.

Your Lordship is capable of forming an opinion on this point, certainly no less correct than mine.

CHESTERFIELD.

Pray assist me.

CHATHAM.

Education and grammar are surely the two dryest of all subjects on which a conversation can turn: yet, if the ground is not promiscuously sown, if what ought to be clear is not covered, if what ought to be covered is not bare, and above all if the plants are choice ones, we may spend a

few moments on it not unpleasantly. It appears then to me, that elegance in prose composition is mainly this: a just admission of topics and of words; neither too many nor too few of either; enough of sweetness in the sound to induce us to enter and sit still; enough of illustration and reflexion to change the posture of our minds when they would tire; and enough of sound matter in the complex to repay us for our attendence. I could perhaps be more logical in my definition, and more concise; but am I at all erroneous?

CHESTERFIELD.

I see not that you are.

CHATHAM.

My ear is well satisfied with Locke: I find nothing idle or redundant in him.

CHESTERFIELD.

But, in the opinion of you graver men, would not some of his principles lead too far?

CHATHAM.

The danger is that few will be led by them far enough: most who begin with him stop short, and, pretending to find pebbles in their shoes, throw themselves down upon the ground and complain of their guide.

CHESTERFIELD.

What then can be the reason why Plato, so

much less intelligible, is so much more quoted and applauded?

CHATHAM.

The difficulties we never trie are no difficulties to us. Those who are upon the summit of a mountain know in some measure its altitude, by comparing it with all objects around; but those who stand at the bottom and never mounted it, can compare it with few only, and with those imperfectly. Until a short time ago I could have conversed more fluently about Plato than I can at present: I had read all the titles to his dialogues and several scraps of commentary; these I have now forgotten, and am indebted to long attacks of the gout for what I have acquired instead.

CHESTERFIELD.

A very severe school-master! I hope he allows a long vacation.

CHATHAM.

Severe he is indeed, and altho he sets no example of regularity, he exacts few observances and teaches many things. Without him I should have had less patience, less learning, less reflexion, less leisure; in short, less of every thing but of sleep.

CHESTERFIELD.

Locke, from a deficiency of fancy, is not likely to attract so many listeners as Plato.

CHATHAM.

And yet occasionally his language is both metaphorical and rich in images. In fact, all our great philosophers have also this property, in a wonderful degree. Not to speak of the devotional, in whose writings one might expect it, we find it abundantly in Bacon, not sparingly in Hobbes; the next to him in range of inquiry and potency of intellect. And what would you think, my lord, if you discovered in the records of Newton a sentence in the spirit of Shakespear?

CHESTERFIELD.

I should look upon it as upon a wonder, not to say a miracle: Newton, like Barrow, had no feeling or respect for poetry.

CHATHAM.

His words are these:

"I don't know what I may seem to the world; but as to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of Truth lay all undiscovered before me."

CHESTERFIELD.

Surely Nature, who had given him the volumes of her greater mysteries to unseal; who had bent over him and taken his hand, and taught him to

decypher the characters of her sacred language; who had lifted up before him her glorious veil, higher than ever yet for mortal, that she might impress her features and her fondness on his heart, threw it back wholly at these words, and gazed upon him with as much admiration as ever he had gazed with upon her.

Plato, I see from the Latin version, lies open on the table: the paragraphs marked with pencil, I presume, are fine passages.

CHATHAM.

I have noted those only which appeared reprehensible, and chiefly where he is disingenuous and malicious.

CHESTERFIELD.

They indeed ought to be the most remarkable of all in the works of a philosopher. If the malice is against those who are thought greater or as great, it goes toward the demonstration that they are so: if on the contrary the objects of it are inferior to himself, he cannot take them up without raising them: unworthy of notice, they are greatly more unworthy of passion. Surely no philosopher would turn to an opposite conclusion from that which in the commencement he had designed to prove; as here he must do.

CHATHAM.

He avoids all open hostility to Democritus and Xenophon and Aristoteles; but I fancy I have detected him in more than one dark passage, with a dagger in his hand and a bitter sneer on his countenance. I know not whether it has been observed before that these words are aimed at the latter, the citizen of another state and the commentator of other laws.

Οὐδ' ἐπιθυμία σε ἄλλης πόλεως οὐδ' ἄλλων νόμων ἔλαθεν εἰδέναι, ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς σοι ἱκανοὶ ἦμεν καὶ ἡ ἡμετέρα πόλις.

The compliment is more injurious to Socrates, for whom it was intended, than the insinuation to Aristoteles. But the prime object of his hatred, open here and undissembled, is Prodicus, author of the beautiful allegory in which Pleasure and Virtue offer themselves to the choice of Hercules. In one place he mentions him with Polus *and many others:* the least difficult and least ingenious of malignant expressions, where great genius is the subject of calumny and invective. One hardly could imagine that he had the assurance and effrontery to call Epicharmus the chief of comic writers, before a people who that very day perhaps had been at a comedy of Aristophanes. The talent of Epicharmus lay in puns and ribaldry,

and Hiero punished him for immodest conversation.

CHESTERFIELD.

I have read somewhere that, when Plato was young, it was predicted of him, from his satirical vein, that he would become in time a substitute for Archilochus.

CHATHAM.

Atheneus, I think, has recorded it. I do not find so much wit as I expected; and, to speak plainly, his wit is the most tiresome and dull part of him: for who can endure a long series of conversations full of questions to entrap a sophist? Why not lead us to the trap at once by some unexpected turn? Yet Plato ought to be more powerful in wit than in argument, for, it is evident, he labours at it more. There is more ingenuity and more gracefulness in a single paper of the *Spectator*, than in six or eight of these dialogues, in all which, not excepting the *Phedo*, I was disappointed.

CHESTERFIELD.

The language is said to be very masterly and sonorous.

CHATHAM.

Αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ ὡσαύτως κατὰ ταῦτα ἔχει, καὶ οὐδέποτε οὐδαμῶς ἀλλοίωσιν οὐδεμίαν ἐνδέχεται. Phædo.

CHESTERFIELD.

Come, come, my Lord; do not attempt to per-

suade me, that an old woman's charm to cure a corn or remove a wart, or a gypsey-girl's to catch a sixpence, is Plato's Greek.

CHATHAM.

Look yourself.

CHESTERFIELD.

I have forgotten the characters pretty nearly: faith! they appear to me, from what I can pick up, to correspond with the sounds you gave them. Jupiter, it is said by the ancients, would have spoken no other language than that of Plato: if ever Jupiter uttered such sounds as these, it could be only when he was crossing the Hellespont.

CHATHAM.

What do you think of this jingle? Πρῶτον εὐλαβηθῶμέν τι πάθος μὴ παθῶμεν.

CHESTERFIELD.

I really thought that his language was accurate and harmonious to the last degree.

CHATHAM.

Generally it is so: his language is the best of him. We moderns are still children in our tongues, at least we English. For my own part, I always spoke in parliament what I considered the most effectual to persuade my hearers, without a care or a thought touching the structure of my sentences: but knowing that the ancient orators

and writers laid the first foundation of their glory upon syllables, I was surprised to find no fewer than nine short ones together in this ambitious and eloquent author... ἄνδρας ἀποδεδοκιμακότες. Phædo. The accents, which were guides to them, altho unwritten, may have taken off somewhat from this peculiarity, and may have been a sort of support to the feebleness of the sound. No modern language can admitt the concourse of so many such; and the Latin was so inadequate to the supply of them, that it produced, I believe, but one galliambic in the times of its strength and fertility, which poem required them in greater numbers, and closer together than any other, but did not receive nine conjointly.

CHESTERFIELD.

Cicero was himself a trifler in cadences, and whoever thinks much about them will become so, if indeed the very thought when it enters is not trifling.

CHATHAM.

I am not sure that it is; for an orderly and sweet sentence, by gaining our ear, conciliates our affections; and the voice of a beggar has often more effect upon us than his distress. Your mention of Cicero on this occasion, reminds me of his *O fortunatam natam me consule Romam.* Playful

as he was in his vanity, I do not believe the verse is his: but Plato wrote ἀλλὰ παρ' αὐτοὺς αὖ τοὺς δεῖν οὓς ὄντας ταῦτα, &c. We may be too fastidious and fantastic in sounds and syllables; but a frequent recurrence of the same is offensive to the ear, and particularly so in poetry. Nevertheless, he who appears to have had a more delicate one than any of the moderns, and indeed whose latinity far surpasses in elegance that of any of the Romans themselves, excepting Cicero, was persuaded that Tibullus was fond and studious of syllabic repetitions. It appears that this poet, says Muretus, thought it elegant to continue them, and that such as the following did not happen by accident, but were produced by application and design. "*Me mea*: Ip*se se*ram. Po*ma ma*nu. Mul*ta ta*bella. Sic*ca ca*nis."

Let me turn over my scrap of paper, which however would best perhaps have kept its place between the leaves here . . .

CHESTERFIELD.

No, my Lord, if you thought any thing worth noticing and writing down, surely I may well think it worth knowing.

CHATHAM.

First, then, I find a mark of admiration, that this most learned and eloquent man, Ciceronian as

he was, and enraptured by Virgil, should not have remarked in them, what he notices as a peculiarity in Tibullus. "*Sin in* processu. *Sin in* sua. Qu*in in*tra portas. Comprend*ere re*fert. O*re re*ferret. Quæ*rere re*gna. Crines effu*sa* sacerdos. A frat*re re*cepi. Turg*ere re*gna. *Ære re*nidenti. Serva*re re*cursus. Sub au*re re*liquit. Mitt*ere re*lictâ. String*ere re*mos. Cur*rere re*mis." In Cicero, I find after an evening's reading, "Si plus adipisca*re re* (where certainly it could as easily have been avoided as committed). Neque excludentes ab ej*us usu suos*. Meo ju*re re*spondeo. Observa*re re*stricte. *Me me*tu libero. Maxi*me me* tuto. Non es*se se se*natorem . ." and, a few words lower, "illos enim bonos du*ces esse, se* jam confectum *se*nectute. Reli*qui qui*." The two most remarkable instances of the kind are in Homer and Anacreon.

Οἷοι τρώϊοι ἵπποι ἐπισ-άμενοι πεδίοιο. Il. E.
Δέσποινα, σοὶ μὲν ἵπποι. Anac. Frag.

In the former you have the same sound six times in six feet; in the latter thrice in three. Yet the sound of neither verse is so unpleasant as that of Horace, where the repetition comes but once:

Dirus per urbes Afer *it It*alas.

As for Plato's wit, what think you of this? *I am*

ready, O Socrates, to give myself up to the strangers, to flea me worse than they flea me now, if the fleaing ends not in a hide, as that of Marsyas did, but in virtue. Or what think you of a project to make a doll and dedicate it to Memory? The stuff that follows is worse still. Toward the end of the volume, in the *Gorgias*, Polus says to Socrates, *Do not you see Archelaus, son of Perdiccas, reigning over the Macedonians?* to which Socrates replies, *If I do not see him, I hear of him.*

In the beginning of the same dialogue, Gorgias, at the request of Socrates to be brief, assents to his propositions, twice, by using the monosyllable: wherupon Socrates says, *I admire your replies, Gorgias: they are as short as they can be.* If the same monosyllable had been the answer to several questions in succession, and if those questions had been complicated and intricate, then, and then only, the remark had been wellplaced.

You remember, my Lord, the derivations made by Swift, of *Agamemnon*, and other names of heroes. These are hardly more absurd and ridiculous than almost all made by Plato, and attributed with great complacency to Socrates, of the same and similar, and are much less literal. It is incredible how erroneous were the most learned,

both among the Greeks and Romans, on the origin of words.

CHESTERFIELD.

I have heard it reported that our own lexicographers are subject to the same animadversion: but I can judge more adequately of bad reasoning or bad wit.

CHATHAM.

A very little of the latter tires and nauseates; but in the former there is generally something to exercise the ingenuity. I have seen persons who could employ a moment or two unreluctantly in straitening a crooked nail: with about the same labour and interest I would hammer upon an inexact thought. Here is one, which I wonder that Cicero, in mentioning the dialogue, has failed to remark. Our philosopher divides rhetoric into the true and the false; as if any part of a definition or description were to be founded on the defects of what is defined or described. Rhetoric may be turned to good or bad purposes; but this is no proof or indication that it must be divided into good and bad: the use of a thing is not the thing itself; how then is the abuse?

The wit of Plato's dialogues is altogether of a single kind, and of that which in a continuance is the least welcome: for irony is akin to cavil; and

cavil, as the best wit is either goodnatured or wears the appearance of goodnature, is nearly its antipode. Plato has neither the grace of Xenophon nor the gravity of Cicero, who tempers it admirably with urbanity and facetiousness. The characteristic of my author is, the dexterity and ease with which he supports and shifts an argument, and exhibits it in all its phases. Nevertheless, a series of interrogations, long as he draws them out for this purpose, would weary me in one dialogue: he continues them in twenty, with people of the same description, on the same subjects.

CHESTERFIELD.

It is rather an idle thing, for an old gentleman in a purple robe, to be sticking pins in every chair on which a sophist is likely to sit down; and rather a tiresome and cheerless one, to follow and stand by him, day after day, in the cold, laying gins for tom-tits.

CHATHAM.

In general, I own, he did so: but both he and Aristoteles turned occasionally their irony (of which indeed the latter had little) where irony is best employed; against false piety, against that which would be the substitute and not the support of morality.

The Greek language, more courteous than the Roman or the French or ours, and resembling in this property the Italian, in addressing a person, had ready, among other terms, ὦ θαυμάσιε and ὦ βέλτιστε. Socrates meets an orderly good man, who, from respect to the laws, is going to accuse his own father of a capital crime, as he imagines it to be; and, doubting if he understood him, asks ὁ σὸς, ὦ βέλτιστε. Aristoteles, in the eighth book of his Ethics, gravely says that children ought to see no indecent statue or picture, unless it represent some God committing the obscenity.

In regard to their philosophy, and indeed to that of the ancients in general, there was little of sound and salutary which they did not derive from Democritus or from Pythagoras: from the former Aristoteles drew most, from the latter Plato. Cicero says improperly of Socrates, what is repeated every day in schools and colleges, that he first drew down Philosophy into private houses: Pythagoras had done so, more systematically and more extensively. Upon his tenets and his discipline were founded many institutions of the earlier and quieter converts to christianity.

CHESTERFIELD.

There is, I remember, a very dangerous doctrine attributed to this Democritus, whom you

mentioned before him: he said that governments should have two supporters, rewards and punishments. Now twelve hangmen, and even twelve judges, may be paid: but Mansfield, I suspect, would committ any man to Bridewell or the pillory who had broached a declaration so seditious, as that people of ordinary business, unhired for it, should be paid for doing their duty. National debts, he would inform the jury, are not to be aggravated by such idle and superfluous expenditure, encreased at any man's option.

CHATHAM.

I know not what my lord Mansfield, a worse enemy to our constitution than even that degraded and despicable prince for whose service he was educated, may think or dictate on the subject: but among all the books I ever redd in which rewards and punishments are mentioned, I never found one where the words come in any other order than this; rewards first, then punishments: a plain evidence and proof to my humble understanding, that in the same succession they present themselves to the unperverted mind. We mention them not only in regard to our polity, but in contemplation of a better state hereafter; and there too they occurr to us as upon earth.

CHESTERFIELD.

In the pleadings of Mansfield, in his charges, in his decisions, in his addresses to parliament, I have heard nothing so strikingly true as these observations of your Lordship, and I wish I had heard nothing so novel.

CHATHAM.

I, in the name of our country, unite with you, my lord, in this wish. Let us trace again the more innocent wanderings of a greater man, I know not whether less prejudiced, but certainly less profligate and corrupt.

Socrates in the *Gorgias* is represented as saying that he believes the soul and body both to exist in another state, altho separately; the body just as it was in life, with all its infirmities, wounds, and distortions. This would be great injustice; for hence a long life, rendered so by frugality and temperance, would acquire, in part of its recompense, the imbecility of age, with deafness, blindness, and whatever else is most afflictive and oppressive in that condition. The soul carries upon its back the marks of floggings and bruizes and scars, contracted by perjuries on earth, and by the delivery *in* court of unjust sentences; such I believe, in this place, is the meaning of ἀδικίαι, and not merely any common acts of injustice. The

utility of such exposures in another life, he says, arises from example to others. But in what manner can they profit by this example? from what wickedness can they be deterred by these scenes of terror? Ideas as idly fanciful, as childishly silly, as his description of the infernal rivers, which he derived from the poets, and which, without line or level, he led over places just as unfruitful afterward as before. Returning to this strange body of his, it cannot be supposed an inert substance: the words *after death* mean *after this life upon earth.* If he would say that it is inert, he must suppose it to be motionless: when did it become so? Strange that it should have motion to reach Tartarus and should then lose it. If so, of what use could it be? He does not say it, nor mean it, I imagine.

CHESTERFIELD.

On some occasions, it appears, he leaves off meaning very abruptly.

CHATHAM.

It is not wonderful or strange that Aristoteles should ridicule his vagaries. Nothing can be more puerile and contemptible than the ideas he attributes to Socrates on future punishments: among the rest, that the damned appeal by name to those whom they have slain or wronged, and are dragged

backward and forward from Tartarus to Cocytus and Periphlegethon, until the murdered or injured consent to pardon them. So the crime is punished, not according to its heinousness, but according to the kindness or severity of those who suffered by it. Now the greater crime is committed in having slain or injured the generous and kind man; the greater punishment is inflicted for injuring or slaying the ungenerous and unkind.

Plato tells us in the *Timeus*, that God created time and the heavens at the same moment, in order that, being born together, they should cease together.

CHESTERFIELD.

Does he inform us also that the Creator in the beginning separated the light from the darkness? an idea very Platonic.

CHATHAM.

No.

CHESTERFIELD.

What other passage amuses your Lordship?

CHATHAM.

Nothing peculiar to this author. Turning over the leaves, I am reminded of what occurs often in the Athenian law-procedures, that while the *prosecutor* has the same appellation as with us, the *defendent* is called the *flyer*, ὁ φεύγων...

a proof, shall I say, that the Athenians were a wiser people, or a less firm one, than we are? They, as we do, say *to give judgement:* but they really did give it, and gratuitously; we must drop a purse of gold on every step of the judgement-seat, or be kicked down headlong.

It is very amusing to trace the expressions of different nations for the same thing. What we, half a century ago, called to *banter*, and what, if I remember the word, I think I have lately heard called to *quiz*, gives no other idea than of coarseness and inurbanity. The French convey one of buz and bustle in *persiffler;* the Italians, as naturally, one of singing, and amusing and misleading the judgement, by *canzonare*, or, as Boccaccio speaks, *uccettare:* the Athenians knew that the Graces and childhood had most power of this kind upon the affections, and their expressions were χαριεντίζειν and παιδεύειν.

In manifestos or remonstrances, we English say, to *draw up*, from our love of conciseness; the Frenchman says *dresser*, very characteristically, and the Italian, the most verbose of men, *stendere.*

Many words have degenerated. Who would imagine that a singer or tipler should derive his appellation from Jupiter? his fellows call

him *jovial.* Our northern gods are respected as little. The vilest of prose or poetry is called *balder-dash:* now Balder was among the Scandinavians the presiding god of poetry and eloquence.

I am reminded, by the mention of poetry, that Plato is offended in the Iliad, at the undignified grief of Achilles and of Priam. To clasp the knee is going too far; and to roll in the dust is beastly. I am certain that he never was a father or a friend: not that among us the loss of friends is accompanied by such violence of affliction, but because I have observed that grief is less often in proportion to delicacy, and even to tenderness, than to the higher energies of our nature and the impetuosity of our nobler passions. The intemperate and wild resentment of Achilles at the injustice of Agamemnon, and his self-devotion, certain as he was of his fate, prepare us for intensity and extravagance of feeling, and teach us that, in such a character, diversity is not incongruity. This censure of the philosopher on the poet, convinces me that the wisest of his works was the burning of his tragedies. Heroism, as Plato would have had it, would be afraid to soil his robe, and Passion would blush to unfold her pocket-hankerchief. He who could censure the two most admirable

passages in Homer, could indeed feel no reluctance at banishing the poets from his republic: and we cannot wonder that he strays wide from sound philosophy, who knows so little of the human heart, as to be ignorant that the poet is most a poet in the midst of its varieties and its excesses. It is only with God that greatness can exist without irregularity. That of Achilles was a necessary and essential part of him. Without it, no resentment at Agamemnon, no abandonment of his cause and of his countrymen, no revenge for Patroclus, no indignity offered to the body of his bravest enemy, no impatience at the first sight of Priam, no effusion of tears at his paternal sorrows, no agony stronger than his vows or than his vengeance, forcing him to deliver up the mangled hero, in short, no Iliad, no Homer. We all are little before such men, and principally when we censure or contend with them. Plato, on this occasion, stands among the ringers of the twelve unchangeable French bells; among the apes who chatter as they pick out the scurf of Shakespear. These two poets divide the ages of the world between them, and will divide the ages of eternity. Prudent men, who wish to avoid the appearance of pygmies, will reverently keep at some distance, laying aside whether it be their cruise of vinegar

or their cake of honey. Plato is the only one of the ancients who extols the poetry of Solon; of whom he says, that, if he had written his poem on the war of the Athenians against the island of Atalantis, undistracted by the business of the state, he might have rivaled the glory of *Hesiod and Homer*. No man of sound judgement ever placed these names together, unless as contemporaries; and he must possess a very unsound one indeed, who calculates thus on the contingency of rivaling Homer.

CHESTERFIELD.

I myself love genteel poetry, and read Hammond's elegies rather than the Iliad: at the same time I confess I have reason to think my choice a wrong one, and that poetry like religion levels the intellects of men, the wise talking on that subject as absurdly as the ignorant. Great poets are the only judges of great poets: and their animosities and prejudices I will not say pervert their judgment, but blott, interline, and corrupt the copies we receive of it. I have as little faith in Plato's love as you have in his philosophy.

CHATHAM.

In his disquisition on love is a receit to cure the hiccup. "*If you will hold your breath a little, it will go: if that should be disagreeable,*

CHESTERFIELD.

In truth, no.

CHATHAM.

He was fond of puns too, and the worst and commonest, those on names. Ἤρεσεν οὖν μοι καὶ ἐν τῷ μύθῳ ὁ Προμηθεὺς μᾶλλον τοῦ Ἐπιμηθέως ᾧ χρώμενος ἐγὼ καὶ προμηθούμενος, &c. and below ἀλλὰ Καλλίᾳ τῷ καλῷ, &c.

The worst is, that he attributes the silliest of sophistry and the basest of malignity to Socrates. A wise and virtuous man may have the misfortune to be at variance with a single great author among his contemporaries; but neither a virtuous nor a wise one can be drawn into hostilities against all the best: he to whom this happens must be imprudent or weak or wicked. Impudence may prompt some to tell you, that, with prodigious manliness and self-devotion, they hazard to cut their feet and break their shins by stemming the current, but that the perilous state of literature calls aloud on them, and that they encounter it equally for the public good, and the correction of the weak writer: but the public good, in my opinion, is ill promoted by telling men that all their other teachers are worth nothing, and that to be contented is to be dull, to be pleased is to be foolish; nor have I remarked or heard of any instance where morals have been improved by

scurrility, diffidence calmed, encouraged, sustained, and led forth, by violence, or genius exalted by contempt. I am sorry that this very great man should have partaken the infirmities of the very least in their worst propensities. This principally has induced me to shew you, that, within the few pages you see between my fingers, he has committed as grave faults in style and sentiment, not only as Prodicus, but (I will believe) as Polus. We hear from the unprejudiced, that Prodicus, like our master Locke, was exact in his definitions; we know that he arrived at the perfection of style; and our gratitude is due to him for one of the most beautiful works delivered to us from antiquity.

CHESTERFIELD.

Your Lordship has proved to me that a divine man, even with a swarm of bees from nose to chin, may cry loud and labour hard, and lay his quarter-staff about him in all directions, and still be a very indifferent buffoon.

CHATHAM.

Buffoonery is hardly the thing wherin a man of genius would be ambitious to excell; but, of all failures, to fail in a witticism is the worst; and the mishap is the more calamitous, in a drawn-out, detailed, and written one.

CHESTERFIELD.

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CHESTERFIELD.

Plato falls over his own sword; not by hanging it negligently or loosely, but by stepping with it awkwardly; and the derision he incurs is proportionate to the gravity of his gait. Half the pleasure in the world arises from malignity; and little of the other half is free from its encroachments. Those who enjoyed his smartness and versatility of attack, laugh as heartily at him as with him, demonstrate that a great man upon the ground is lower than a little man upon his legs, and conclude that the light of imagination leads only to gulphs and precipices.

CHATHAM.

We however, with greater wisdom and higher satisfaction, may survey him calmly and reverentially, as one of lofty, massy, comprehensive mind, whose failings myriads have partaken, whose excellences few; and we may consider him as an example, the more remarkable and striking to those we would instruct, for that very inequality and asperity of character, which many would exaggerate, and some conceal. Let us however rather trust Locke and Bacon: let us believe the one to be a wiser man, and the other both a wiser and better. I declare to you, I should have the

courage to say the same thing, if they were living, and expelled from court and Christchurch.

CHESTERFIELD.

We think more advantageously of artificial dignities while the bearers are living, more advantageously of real when they are dead.

CHATHAM.

The tomb is the pedestal of greatness. I make a distinction between God's great and the king's great.

CHESTERFIELD.

Very rightly. *Non bene conveniunt nec in unâ sede morantur.* So much the worse for both parties. Compliments are in their place only where there is full as much of weakness as of merit, so that when I express my admiration to your lordship, all idea of compliment must vanish. Permitt me then to say that I have always been much gratified at this among your other great qualities, that, possessing more wit than perhaps any man living, you have the moderation to use it rarely, and oftener in friendship than in enmity.

CHATHAM.

Profligate men and pernicious follies may fairly and reasonably be exposed; light peculiarities may also be exhibited; but only in such a manner that he who gave the prototype would willingly take

the copy. But in general he who pursues another race of writers, is little better than a foxhunter who rides twenty miles from home for the sport: what can he do with his game when he has caught it? As he is only the servant of the dogs, so the satirist is only a caterer to the ferocious or false appetites of the most indiscriminating and brutal minds. Does he pretend that no exercise else is good for him? he confesses then an unsoundness in a vital part.

CHESTERFIELD.

Reflexions such as these induced me long ago to preferr the wit of Addison and La Fontaine to all other: it is more harmless, more gay, and more insinuating.

CHATHAM.

Our own language contains in it a greater quantity and a greater variety of wit and humour, than all the rest of all ages and countries, closing only Cervantes, the Homer of irony, and not only of sharper and better-tempered wit than he who lies before me, but even of an imagination more vivid and poetical, a sounder too and shrewder philosopher. The little volume of Lord Bacon's *Essays*, in my opinion, exhibits not only more strength of mind, not only more true philosophy, but more originality, more fancy, more

imagination, than all these volumes of Plato; supposing even that he drew nothing from others; wheras we must receive the authority of antiquity, and believe that he owed to them the greater part, and almost all. Without this authority, we should perceive it in the absence of fixt principles, and in the meddling and jarring of contradictory positions.

It must be conceded that we moderns are but slovens in composition, or ignorant for the most part of its regulations and laws; but we may insist that there have been amongst us those, to whom, in all the higher magistratures of intellect, the gravest of the ancients would have risen up, and whom they would have placed with proper deference at their side.

CHESTERFIELD.

I never have found any one so unprejudiced and so unprepossessed on Plato.

CHATHAM.

My Lord, I do not know that I am entirely.

CHESTERFIELD.

How! my Lord.

CHATHAM.

I know that all I have said is just and incontrovertible, and that I could add ten times, or perhaps twenty, as much and as fairly: but I cannot

take to myself a praise that does not belong to me, any more than I could a purse. I dislike, not to say detest, the character of Plato, as I collect it from his works: and the worst part of it I conceive to be his coldness and insincerity in friendship, or rather, his incapacity for any rightly called so. He pretended to have been sick during the imprisonment of Socrates. Was he so very sick that he could not have been carried, to receive the last words of his departing friend? the last counsels of a master, so affectionate and impressive? He was never sick when a prince was to be visited on his throne, insolent and tyrannical as that prince might be.

CHESTERFIELD.

A throne is to few so frightful a thing as a death-bed.

CHATHAM.

My Lord, it is a more frightful thing to any man who knows it well, than the death-couch of Socrates was to himself, or to those who from their hearts could reason as he did on it.

CHESTERFIELD.

I am happy, my lord, and grateful to you, that the conversation has taken a different turn from what I had expected. I came to receive some information from you, on what might be profitable

in the education of the young, and you have given me some which could be greatly so in that of the old. My system, I know, cannot be quite according to your sentiments; but as no man living hath a nobler air or a more dignified demeanour than your Lordship, I shall be flattered by hearing that what I have written on politeness meets in some degree your approbation.

CHATHAM.

I believe you are right, my lord. What is superficial in politeness, what we see oftenest, and what people generally admire most, must be laid upon a cold breast or will not stand: but whatever is most graceful in it can be produced only by the movements of the heart.

CHESTERFIELD.

I believe these movements are to be imitated, and as easily as those of the feet; and that all good actors must beware of being moved too much from within. My lord, I do not enquire of you whether that huge quarto is the bible; for I see the letters on the back.

CHATHAM.

I did not imagine your Lordship was so religious: I am heartily glad to witness your veneration for a book, which, to say nothing of its holiness or authority, contains more specimens

of genius and of taste than any other volume in existence.

CHESTERFIELD.

I kissed it from no such motive: I kissed it preparatorily to swearing on it, as your Lordship's power and credit is from this time forward at my mercy, that I never will divulge, so help me God! the knowledge I possess of your reading Greek and philosophy.

Lord Chatham left two sons: one inherited his pension, the other his power, neither of them his virtues, his manners, or his abilities; yet each fancied that he had the better part of the inheritance. One squandered away his own fortune, the other the public, and, without aim or object, fixed on the country such burdens as are never to be removed.

CONVERSATION XVI.

ARISTOTELES

AND

CALLISTHENES.

ARISTOTELES

AND

CALLISTHENES.

ARISTOTELES.

I REJOICE, O Callisthenes, at your return; and the more as I see you in the dress of your country, while others, who appear to me of the lowest rank, by their language and their physiognomy, are arrayed in the Persian robe, and mix the essence of rose with pich.

CALLISTHENES.

I thank the Gods, O Aristoteles, that I embrace you again; that my dress is a Greek one and an old one; that the conquests of Alexander have cost me no shame, and have encumbered me with no treasures.

ARISTOTELES.

Jupiter! what then are all those tapestries, for

I will not call them dresses, which the slaves are carrying after you, in attendence (as they say) on your orders?

CALLISTHENES.

They are presents from Alexander to Xenocrates; by which he punishes, as he declared to the Macedonians, both me and you: and I am well convinced that the punishment will not terminate here, but that he, at once so irascible and so vindictive, will soon exercise his new dignity of godship, by breaking our heads, or, in the wisdom of his providence, by removing them an arm's length from our bodies.

ARISTOTELES.

On this subject we must talk again. Xenocrates is indeed a wise and virtuous man; and altho I could wish that Alexander had rather sent him a box of books than a bale of woolen, I acknowledge that the latter gift could hardly have been better bestowed.

CALLISTHENES.

You do not appear to value very highly the learning of this philosopher.

ARISTOTELES.

To talk and dispute are more the practices of the Platonic school than to read and meditate. Talkative men seldom read. This is among the

few truths which appear the more strange the more we reflect upon them. For what is reading but silent conversation? People make extremely free use of their other senses; and I know not what difficulty they could find or apprehend in making use of their eyes, particularly in the gratification of a propensity which they indulge so profusely by the tongue. The fatigue, one would think, is less; the one organ requiring much motion, the other little. Added to which, they may leave their opponent when they please, and never are subject to captiousness or personality. In open contention with any argumentative adversary, the worst brand a victor imposes is a blush. The talkative man blows the fire himself for the reception of it; and we cannot deny that it may also be suffered by a reader, if his conscience lies open to reproach: but even in this case, the stigma is illegible on his brow; no one triumphs in his defeat, or even freshens his wound, as may sometimes happen, by the warmth of sympathy. All men, you and I among the rest, are more desirous of conversing with a great philosopher, or other celebrated man, than of reading his works. There are several reasons for this; some of which it would be well if we could deny or palliate. In justice to ourselves and him, we ought to preferr

his writings to his speech; for even the wisest say many things inconsiderately; and there never was a man in the world who ever uttered extemporaneously three sentences in succession, such as, if he thought soundly and maturely upon them afterwards, he would not in some sort modify and correct. Effrontery and hardness of heart, are the characteristics of every great speaker I can mention, excepting Phocion; and if he is exempt from them, it is because eloquence, in which no one ever excelled or ever will excell him, is secondary to philosophy in this man, and philosophy to generosity of spirit. On the same principles as impudence is the quality of great speakers and disputants, modesty is that of great readers and composers. Not only are they abstracted by their studies from the facilities of ordinary conversation, but they discover from time to time, things of which they were ignorant before, and on which they had not even the ability of doubting. We, my Callisthenes, may consider them, not only as gales that refresh us while they propell us forward, but as a more compendious engine of the gods, whereby we are brought securely into harbour, and deeply laden with imperishable wealth. Let us then strive day and night to increase the number of these beneficent beings, and

to stand among them in the sight of the living and the future. It is required of us that we give more than we received.

CALLISTHENES.

O my guide and teacher! you are one of the blessed few at whose hands the Gods may demand it: if they had intended to place it in my duties, they would have chosen me a different master. How small a part of what I have acquired from you (and to you I owe all I possess), shall I be able to transmitt to others!

ARISTOTELES.

Encourage better hopes. Again I tell you, it is required of us, not merely that we place the grain in a garner, but that we ventilate and sift it, that we separate the full from the empty, the faulty from the sound, and that, if it must form the greater, it do not form the more elegant part, of the entertainment our friends expect from us. I am now in the decline of life: to shove me from behind would be a boyish trick; but wherever I fall I shall fall softly: the Gods have placed me in a path out of which no violence can remove me. In youth our senses and the organs of them wander; in the middle of life they cease to do it; in old age the body itself, and chiefly the head, bends over and points to the earth, which must

soon receive it, and partakes in some measure of its torpour and passivity.

CALLISTHENES.

You appear to me still fresh and healthy, and your calmness and indifference to accidents are the effects of philosophy rather than of years.

ARISTOTELES.

Plato is older by twenty, and has lost nothing of juvenility but the colour of his hair. The higher delights of the mind, are in this, as in every thing else, very different in their effects from its seductive passions. These cease to gratify us the sooner, the earlier we indulge in them: on the contrary, the earlier we indulge in thought and reflexion, the longer do they last, and the more faithfully do they serve us. So far are they from shortening or debilitating our animal life, that they prolong and strengthen it greatly. The body is as much at repose in the midst of high imaginations as in the midst of profound sleep. In imperfect sleep it wears away much, as also in imperfect thoughts, in thoughts that cannot rise from the earth and sustain themselves above it. The object which is in a direct line behind a thing, seems near: now nothing is in a more direct line than death to life: why should it not also be considered on the first sight as near at

hand? Swells and depressions, smooth ground and rough, usually lie between; the distance may be rather more or rather less; the proximity is certain. Alexander, a God, descends from his throne to conduct me...

CALLISTHENES.

Endurance on the part of the injured, is more pathetic than passion. The intimate friends of this conductor will quarrel over his carcase while yet warm, as dogs over a dish laid aside after supper. How different are our conquests from his! how different our friends! not united for robbery and revelry, but joyous in discovery, calm in meditation, and intrepid in research. How often, and throughout how many ages, shall you be a refuge from such men as he and his accomplices! how often will the studious, the neglected, the deserted, fly toward you for compensation in the wrongs of fortune, and for solace in the rigour of destiny! His judgement-seat is covered by his sepulchre: after one year hence no appeals are made to him: after ten thousand there will be momentous questions, not of avarice or litigation, not of violence or fraud, but of reason and of science, brought before you, and settled by your award. Dyers and tailors, carvers and gilders, grooms and trumpeters, make greater men than

God makes; but God's last longer, throw them where you will.

ARISTOTELES.

Alexander has really punished me by his splendid gifts to Xenocrates: for he obliges me also to send him the best tunic I have; and you know that in my wardrobe I am, as appears to many, unphilosophically splendid. There are indeed no pearls in this tunic, but golden threads pursue the most intricate and most elegant design, the texture is the finest of Miletus, the wool is the softest of Tarentum, and the purple is Hermionic. He will sell Alexander's dresses, and wear mine; the consequence of which will be imprisonment or scourges.

CALLISTHENES.

A provident God forsooth in his benefits, our Alexander!

ARISTOTELES.

Much to be pitied if ever he returns to his senses! Justly do we call barbarians the wretched nations that are governed by kings; and amongst them all the most deeply plunged in barbarism is the ruler. Let us take any favorable specimen; Cyrus for instance, or Cambyses, or this Alexander: for however much you and I may despise him, seeing him often and nearly, he will perhaps

leave behind him as celebrated a name as they. He is very little amidst philosophers, but very great amidst monarchs. Is he not undoing with all his might, what every wise man, and indeed every man in the order of things, is most solicitous to do? namely, does he not abolish all kindly and affectionate intercourse? does he not draw a line of distinction (which of all follies and absurdities is the wildest and most pernicious) between fidelity and truth? In the hour of distress and misery the eye of every mortal turns to friendship: in the hour of gladness and conviviality what is our want? 'tis friendship. When the heart overflows with gratitude, or with any other sweet and sacred sentiment, what is the word to which it would give utterance? *my friend.* Having thus displaced the right feeling, he finds it necessary to substitute at least a strong one. The warmth, which should have been diffused from generosity and mildness, must come from the spiceman, the vintner, and the milliner: he must be perfumed, he must be drunk, he must toss about shawl and tiara. One would imagine that his first passion, his ambition, had an object: yet, before he was a God, he prayed that no one afterward might pass the boundaries of his expedition; and he destroyed at Abdera, and in other places,

the pillars erected as memorials by the Argonauts and by Sesostris*.

Perhaps you were present, when Alexander ran around the tomb of Achilles in honour of his memory: if Achilles were now living, or any hero like him, Alexander would swear his perdition. Neither his affection for virtue nor his enmity to vice is pure or rational. Observation has taught me that we do not hate those who are worse than ourselves because they are worse, but because we are liable to injury from them, and because (as almost always is the case) they are preferred to

* On the Argonautic expedition I had introduced a few remarks which interrupted the main current of the dialogue. The Greeks were fond of attributing to themselves all the great actions of remote antiquity: thus they feigned that Isis, *the daughter of Inachus*, taught the Egyptians laws and letters, &c. &c. I doubt whether the monuments and actions attributed to the Argonauts were not really those of Sesostris or Osiris or some other eastern conqueror; and even whether *the tale of Troy divine* be not, in part at least, translated. Many principal names, evidently not Grecian, and the mention of a language spoken by the Gods, in which the rivers and other earthly things are called differently from what they are called among men, are the foundations of my belief. The Hindoos, the Egyptians, and probably the Phrygians, (a very priestly nation) had their learned language quite distinct from the vulgar.

us; while those who are better we hate purely for being so. After their decease, if we remitt our hatred, it is because then they are more like virtue in the abstract than virtuous men, and are fairly out of our way.

As for the wisdom of Alexander, I do not expect from a Macedonian the prudence of an Epaminondas or a Phocion: but educated by such a father as Philip, and having with him in his army so many veteran captains, it excited no small ridicule in Athens, when it was ascertained that he and Darius, then equally eager for combat, missed each other's army in Cilicia.

CALLISTHENES.

He has done great things, but with great means: the generals you mention overcame more difficulties with less, and never were censured for any failure from deficiency of foresight.

ARISTOTELES.

There is as much difference between Epaminondas and Alexander as between the Nile and a winter torrent: in the latter there is more impetuosity, foam, and fury; more astonishment from spectators; but it is followed by devastation and barrenness: in the former there is an equable, a steddy, and perennial course, swelling from its

ordinary state only for the benefit of mankind, and subsiding only when that has been secured.

I have not mentioned Phocion so often as I ought to have done: but now, Callisthenes, I will acknowledge that I consider him as the greatest man upon earth. He foresaw long ago what has befallen our country; and while others were proving to you that your wife, if a good woman, should be at the disposal of your next neighbour, and that if you love your children you should procure them as many fathers as you can, Phocion was practising all the domestic and all the social duties.

CALLISTHENES.

I have often thought that his style resembles yours... are you angry?

ARISTOTELES.

I will not dissemble to you that mine was formed upon his. Polieuctus, by no means a friend to him, preferred it openly to that of Demosthenes, for its brevity, its comprehensiveness, and its perspicuity. There is somewhat more of pomp and solemnity in Demosthenes, and perhaps of harmony; but in Phocion there is all the acuteness of Pericles, all the wit of Aristophanes. He conquered with few soldiers, and he convinced with few

words... I know not what better description I could give you either of a great captain or great orator.

Now imagine for a moment the mischief which the system of Plato, just alluded to, would produce. First that women should be common. We hear that among the Etrurians they were so, and perhaps they are so still: but of what illustrious action do we read, ever performed by that ancient people? Thousands of years have elapsed without a single instance on record, of courage or generosity. With us one word, altered only in its termination, signifies both *father* and *country*: can he who is ignorant of the one be solicitous about the other? Never was there a true patriot who was not also, if a father, a kind one: never was there a good citizen who was not also an obedient and reverential son. Strange, to be ambitious of pleasing the multitude, and indifferent to the delight we may afford to those nearest to us, our parents and our children! Ambition is indeed the most inconsiderate of passions, none of which are considerate; for the ambitious man, by the weakest inconsistency, proud as he may be of his faculties and impatient as he may be to display them, prefers the opinion of the ignorant to his own. He would be what others can make him, and not what he could make himself without

them. Nothing in fact is consistent and unambiguous but virtue.

Plato would make wives common, to abolish selfishness; the very mischief which above all others it would directly and immediately bring forth. There is no selfishness where there is a wife and family: the house is lighted up by the mutual charities: every thing atchieved for them is a victory; every thing endured for them is a triumph. How many vices are suppressed, that there may be no bad example! how many exertions made, to recommend and inculcate a good one! Selfishness then is thrown out of the question. He would perhaps make men braver by his exercises in the common field of affections. Now bravery is of two kinds; the courage of instinct and the courage of reason: animals have more of the former, men more of the latter; for I would not assert, what many do, that animals have no reason, as I would not that men have no instinct. Whatever creature can be taught, must be taught by the operation of reason upon reason, small as may be the quantity called forth, or employed in calling it, and of however coarse matter may be the means. Instinct has no operation but upon the wants and desires. Those who entertain a contrary opinion, are unaware how inconsequently they speak, when they

employ such expressions as these, *We are taught by instinct.* Courage, so necessary to the preservation of states, is not weakened by domestic ties, but is braced by them. Much is gained both on the side of instinct and on the side of reason. All creatures protect their young while they know it to be theirs, and neglect it when the traces of that memory are erased. Man cannot so soon lose the memory of it, because his recollective faculties are more comprehensive and more tenacious, and because, while in the brute creation the parental love, which in most animals is only on the female side, lessens after the earlier days, his increases as the organs of the new creature are developed. There is a desire of property in the wisest and best men, which Nature seems to have implanted as conservative of her works, and which also is necessary to encourage and keep alive the arts. Phidias and our friend Apelles would never have existed as the Apelles and Phidias they appear, if property (I am ashamed of the solecism which Plato now forces on me) were in common. A part of his scheme indeed may be accomplished in select and small communities, holden together by some religious bond, as we find among the disciples of Pythagoras: but this incomparable man never taught his followers that prostitution is a virtue, much less

that it is the summit of perfection. They revered him, and most deservedly, as a father . . . as what father? not such as Plato would fashion, but as a parent who had gained authority over his children, by his assiduous vigilance, his tender and peculiar care, in separating them, as far as possible, from whatever is noxious, in an intercourse with mankind.

To complete the system of selfishness, idleness, and licentiousness, the republican triad of Plato, nothing was wanting but to throw all property where he had thrown the wives and children. Who then should curb the rapacious? who should moderate the violent? The weaker could not work, the stronger would not. Food and raiment would fail; and we should be reduced to something worse than a state of nature: into a state of nature we can never be cast back, any more than we can become children again. Civilization suddenly retrograde, generates at once the crimes and vices, not only of all its stages, but of the state anterior to it, without any individual of its advantages, if it indeed have any. Plato would make for ever all the citizens what we punish with death a single one for being once. He was a man of hasty fancy and slow reflexion; more different from Socrates than the most violent of his adversaries. If

he had said that in certain cases, a portion of landed property should be divided among the citizens, he had spoken sagely and equitably. After a long war, when a state is oppressed by debt, and when many, who have borne arms for their country, have also consumed their patrimony in its service, these, if they are fathers of families, should receive allotments from the estates of others who are not so, and who either were too young for warfare, or were occupied in less dangerous and more lucrative pursuits. It is also conducive to the public good, that no person should possess more than a certain and definite extent of land, to be limited by the population and produce: else the freedom of vote or the honesty of election must be extinguished, and the least active members of the community will occupy those places which require the most activity. This is peculiarly needful in mercantile states, like ours, that every one may enjoy the prospect of becoming a landholder, and that the money accruing from the sale of what is curtailed on the larger properties, may again fall into commerce. A state may eventually be reduced to such distresses by war, even after victories, that it shall be expedient to deprive the rich of whatever they possess, beyond that which is requisite for the decent and frugal sustinence of a family.

This extremity it is difficult to foresee; nor do I think it is arrived at, until the industrious and well-educated, in the years of plenty, are unable by their best exertions to nourish and instruct their children.. a speculative case, which it cannot be dangerous or mischievous to state; for certainly, when it occurs, the sufferers will appeal to the laws and forces of Nature, and not to the schools of rhetoric or philosophy. No situation can be imagined more painful or more abominable than this: while many, and indeed most, are more so, than that to which the wealthier would be reduced in emending it; since they would lose no comforts, no conveniences, no graceful and unincumbering ornaments of life, and very few luxuries; all which would be abundantly compensated to the generality of them, by smoothening their mutual pretensions, and by extinguishing the restless spirit of their rivalry.

CALLISTHENES.

The visions of Plato have led to Reason: I marvel less that he should have been so extravagant, than that he should have scattered on that volume so little of what we admire in his shorter Dialogues.

ARISTOTELES.

I respect his genius, which however has not ac-

companied all his steps in this discussion: nor indeed do I censure in him what has been condemned by Xenophon; who wonders that he should attribute to Socrates long dissertations on the soul, and other abstruse doctrines, when that singularly acute reasoner discoursed with his followers on topics only of plain utility. For it is requisite that important things should be attributed to important men; and a sentiment would derive but small importance from the authority of Crito or Phedo. A much greater fault is attributable to Xenophon himself, who has not even preserved the coarse features of nations and of ages, in his Cyropedia.

A small circle of wise men should mark the rise of mind, as the Egyptian priests marked the rise of their river, and should leave it chronicled in their temples. Cyrus should not discourse like Solon.

CALLISTHENES.

You must also then blame Herodotus.

ARISTOTELES.

If I blame Herodotus, whom can I commend? He reminds me of Homer by his facility and his variety, and by the suavity and fulness of his language. His view of history was, nevertheless, like that of the Asiatics, who write to instruct and please. Now truly there is little that could in-

struct, and less that could please us, in the actions and speeches of barbarians, from among whom the kings alone come forth visibly. Delightful tales and apposite speeches are the best things you could devise; and many of these undoubtedly were current in the East, and were collected by Herodotus; some, it is probable, were invented by him. It is of no importance to the world, whether the greater part of historical facts, in such countries, be true or false; but they may be rendered of the highest, by the manner in which a writer of genius shall represent them. If history were altogether true, it would be not only undignified but unsightly: great orators would often be merely the mouthpieces of prostitutes, and great captains would be hardly more than the gladiators of buffoons. The prime movers of those actions which appall and shake the world, are generally the vilest things in it; and the historian, if he discovers them, must conceal them or hold them back.

CALLISTHENES.

Pray tell me whether, since I left Athens, your literary men are busy.

ARISTOTELES.

More than ever..as the tettix chirps loudest in time of drought. Amongst them we have some

excellent writers, and such as under Minerva will keep out the Persian tongue from the Pireus. Others are preferred to lucrative offices, are made ambassadors and salt-surveyors, and whatever else is most desirable to common minds, for proving the necessity of more effectual (this is always the preamble) and less changeful laws, such as those of the Medes and Indians. Several of these orators, whose granfathers were in a condition little better than servile, have had our fortunes and lives at their disposal; and are now declaming on the advantages of what they call *regular government*. You would suppose they mean that perfect order which exists when citizens rule themselves, and when every family is to the republic what every individual is to the family; a system of mutual zeal and mutual forbearance. No such thing: they mean a government with themselves at the head, and such as may ensure to them impunity for their treasons and peculations. One of them a short time ago was to consult with Metanyctius, a leading man among the Thracians, in what manner, and by what instalments, a sum of money, advanced to the latter by our republic, should be repaid. Metanyctius burst into a loud fit of laughter on reading the first words of the decree. *Dine with me*, said he,

and we will conclude the business when we are alone. The dinner was magnificent; which in all such business is the best economy: few contractors or financiers can afford to give a plain one. *Your republic,* said Metanyctius, *is no longer able to enforce its claim; and we are as little likely to want your assistence in future, as you would be inclined to afford it. A seventh of the amount is at my disposal: you shall possess it. I shall enjoy about the same emolument for my fidelity to my worthy masters. The return of peace is so desirable, and regular government so divine a blessing, added to which, your countrymen are become of late so indifferent to inquiry into what the factious would call abuses, that, I pledge my experience, you will return amidst their acclamations and embraces.*

Our negotiator became one of the wealthiest men in the world, altho wealth is now accumulated in some families to such an amount, as our ancestors, even in the age of Crœsus or of Midas, would have deemed incredible. For wars drive up riches in heaps, as winds drive up snows, making and concealing many abysses.

Metanyctius was the more provident and the more prosperous of the two. I know not in what king's interest he was, but probably the Persian's;

be this as it may, it was resolved for the sake of good *understanding* (another new expression) and good neighbourhood, to abolish the name of republic throughout the world. This appeared an easy matter. Our negotiator rejoiced in the promise exacted from him, to employ all his address in bringing about a thing so desirable: for *republic* sounded in his ears like *retribution*. It was then demanded that all laws should be abolished, and that kings should govern at their sole discretion. This was better still, but more difficult to accomplish. He promised it however; and a large body of barbarian troops was raised in readiness to invade our territory, when the decree of Alexander reached the city, ordering that all the states both of Greece and Asia should retain their pristine laws. The conqueror had also found letters and accounts, which his loquacity would not allow him to keep secret; and our negotiator, whose opinion (a very common one) was, that exposure alone is ignominy, at last severed his weason with an ivory-handled knife.

CALLISTHENES.

On this ivory the Goddess of our city will look down with more complacency than on that of which her own image is composed; and the blade should be preserved with those which, on the ho-

liest of our festivals, are displayed to us covered in their handful of myrtle, as they were carried by Harmodius and Aristogiton.

And now tell me, Aristoteles, for the question much interests me, are you happy in the midst of Macedonians, Illyrians, and other strange creatures, at which we wonder when we see their bodies and habiliments so like ours?

ARISTOTELES.

Dark reflexions do occasionally come, as it were by stealth, upon my mind; but philosophy has power to dispell them. I care not whether the dog that defends my house and family be of the Laconian breed or the Molossian: if he steals my bread or bites the hand that offers it, I strangle him or cut his throat, or engage a more dexterous man to do it, the moment I catch him sleeping.

CALLISTHENES.

The times are unfavorable to knowledge.

ARISTOTELES.

Knowledge and wisdom are different: we may know many new things without an encrease of wisdom; but it would be a contradiction to say that we can know any thing new without an encrease of knowledge. The knowledge that is to be acquired by communication, is intercepted or impeded by tyranny. I have lost an ibis, or perhaps an hippo-

potamos, by losing the favour of Alexander; he has lost an Aristoteles. He may deprive me of life; but in doing so, he must deprive himself of all that he has ever been contending for...of glory: and even a more reasonable man than he, will acknowledge that there is as much difference between life and glory, as there is between an ash-flake from the brow of Etna, and the untamable and eternal fires within its center. I may lose disciples: he may put me out of fashion; a tailor's lad can do as much. He may forbid the reading of my works; less than a tailor's lad can do that; idleness can do it, night can do it, sleep can do it, a sunbeam rather too hot, a few hailstones, a few drops of rain, a call to dinner. By his wealth and power he might have afforded me opportunities of improving some branches of science, which I alone have cultivated with assiduity and success. Fools may make wise men wiser more easily than wise men can make them so. At all events, Callisthenes, I have prepared for myself a monument, from which perhaps some atoms may be detached by time, but which will retain its magnificence and the traces of its symmetry, when the substance and site of Alexander's shall be forgotten. Who knows but that the very ant-hill wheron I stand, may preserve its figure and con-

texture, when the sepulchre of this Macedonian shall be the solitary shed of some robber, or the manger of mules and camels*! If I live I will leave behind me the history of our times, from the accession of Philip to the decease of Alexander.. for our comet must disappear soon; the moral order of the world requires it. How happy and glorious was Greece at the commencement of the period! how pestilential was the folly of those rulers, who rendered, by a series of idle irritations and untimely attacks, a patient for Anticyra the arbiter of the universe!

I will now return with you to Plato, whose plan of government, by the indulgence of the Gods, has lain hitherto on their knees.

CALLISTHENES.

I was unwilling to interrupt you; otherwise I should have remarked the bad consequences of excluding the poets from his commonwealth; not because they are in general the most useful members of it, but because we should punish a song more severely than a larceny. There are verses

* Saint John Chrysostom, in his twenty-fifth homily, teaches us that neither the sepulchre of Alexander, nor the day of his death, was known in that age.

Πῦ, εἰπέ μοι, τὸ σῆμα Ἀλεξάνδρου; δεῖξόν μοι· καὶ εἰπὲ τὴν ἡμέραν καθ' ἣν ἐτελεύτησε.

in Euripides such as every man utters who has the tooth-ache: and all expressions of ardent love have the modulation and emphasis of poetry. What a spheristerion is opened here to the exercise of informers! we should create more of these than we should drive out of poets. Judges would often be puzzled in deciding a criminal suit; for, before they could lay down the nature of the crime, they must ascertain what are the qualities and quantities of a dithyrambic. Now, Aristoteles, I suspect that even you cannot do this: for I observe in Pindar a vast variety of commutable feet, sonorous, it is true, in their cadences, but irregular and unrestricted. You avoid, as all good writers do carefully, whatever is dactylic, for the dactyl is the bindweed of prose; but I know not what other author has trimmed it with such frugal and attentive husbandry *. One alone, in writing

* Callisthenes means the instance where another dactyl, or a spondee, follows it; in which case only is the period to be called dactylic. Cicero, on one occasion, was so indifferent to it, as to take it in preference to a weak elision, or to the concurrence of two *esses*.

Quinctus Mutius augur
Scævola multa; ac...

He judged rightly; but he could easily have done better.

or conversation, would subject a man to violent suspicion of bad citizenship; and he who should employ it twice in a page or an oration, would be

A dactyl succeded by a dichoree, or by a trochee with a spondee at the close, is among the sweetest of pauses; the gravest and most majestic, in my opinion, is composed of a dactyl, a dichoree, and a dispondee. He, however, will soon grow tiresome, who permits his partiality, to any one close, to be obtrusive or remarkable or apparent. The two most harmonious prose-writers, with all the disadvantages of their language, are Bossuet and Rousseau; and perhaps they are also the two most dexterous in the management of their arguments.

The remark I attribute to Callisthenes, on the freedom of Aristoteles from pieces of verse in his sentences, is applicable to Plato, and surprisingly so, if we consider how florid and decorated is his language. Among the Romans T. Livius is the most abundant in them. Among the Greeks there is a curious instance in the prefatory words of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

Φύσεως δὴ νόμος ἅπασι κοινὸς, ὃν οὐδεὶς καταλύσει χρόνος, ἄρχειν δεὶ τῶν ἡττόνων τοὺς κρείττονας.

All these words appear to have been taken from some tragedy: the last constitute a perfect iambic; and the preceding, with hardly a touch, assume the same appearance: the diction too is quite poetical: *ἅπασι κοινὸς...καταλύσει*, &c.

Ἅπασι κοινός ἐστι τῆς φύσεως νόμος,
Ὃν...οὐδεὶς...καταλύσει χρόνος,
Ἄρχειν δεὶ τῶν ἡττόνων τοὺς κρείττονας.

The original must be very ancient: in the Gorgias of Plato

deemed so dangerous and desperate a malefactor, that it might be requisite to dig a pitfall or to lay an iron trap for him, or to noose him in his bed. Throughout all your works there is certainly no sentence that has not an iambic in it; now our grammarians tell us that one is enough to make a verse, as one theft is enough to make a thief: an informer then has only to place it last in his bill of indictment, and not Minos himself could absolve you.

ARISTOTELES.

They will not easily take me for a poet.

CALLISTHENES.

Nor Plato for any thing else: he would be like a bee caught in his own honey.

ARISTOTELES.

I must remark to you, Callisthenes, that among the writers of luxuriant and florid prose, however rich and fanciful, there never was one who wrote good poetry. Imagination seems to start back

is the same idea in nearly the same words; and as Plato was a great *spheterizer* (for borrowing and stealing, in speaking of philosophers, are indecorous terms), I rather think he took it from the poet than the poet from him. Δηλοῖ δὲ ταῦτα πολλαχοῦ ὅτι οὕτως ἔχει, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ζωοῖς, καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ὅλαις ταῖς πόλεσι καὶ γένεσιν, ὅτι οὕτω τὸ δίκαιον κέκριται, τὸν κρείττω τοῦ ἥττονος ἄρχειν καὶ πλέον ἔχειν. This law has not only been violated but reversed.

when they would lead her into a narrower walk, and to forsake them at the first prelude of the lyre.

Plato has written much poetry, of which a few epigrams alone are remembered. He burned his iambics, but not until he found that they were thoroughly dry and withered. If ever a good poet should excell in prose, we, who know how distinct are the qualities, and how great must be the comprehension and the vigor that unites them, shall contemplate him as an object of wonder, and almost of worship. This is remarkable in Plato: he is the only florid writer who is animated. He will always be ardently admired, by those who have attained a considerable share of learning, and little of precision; from the persuasion that they understand him, and that others do not; for men universally are ungrateful toward him who instructs them, unless in the hours or in the intervals of instruction he present a sweet cake to their self-love.

CALLISTHENES.

I never saw two men so different as you and he.

ARISTOTELES.

Yet many of those very sentiments in which we appear most at variance, can be drawn together until they meet. I had represented excessive

wealth as the contingency most dangerous to a republic: he took the opposite side, and asserted that poverty is more so *. Now wherever there is excessive wealth, there is also in the train of it excessive poverty; as where the sun is brightest the shade is deepest. Many republics have stood for ages, while no citizen of them was very rich, and while on the contrary most were very poor: but none hath stood so long, after that many, or indeed a few, have grown inordinately rich. Wealth causes poverty, then irritates it, then corrupts it; so that throughout its whole progress and action it is dangerous to the state. Plato defends his thesis with his usual ingenuity; for if there is nowhere a worse philosopher, there is hardly anywhere a better writer. He says, and truly, that the poor become wild and terrible animals, when they no longer can gain their bread by their trades and occupations; and that, laden to excess with taxes, they learn a lesson from Necessity, which they never would have taken up without her. Upon this all philosophers, all men of common sense indeed, must think alike. Usually,

* It is evident that Aristoteles wrote his Politica after Plato, for he alludes to a false opinion of Plato's in the proœmium: but many of the opinions must have been promulgated by both, long before the publication of their works.

if not always, the poor are quiet, while there is amongst them no apprehension of becoming poorer, that is, while the government is not oppressive and unjust: but the rich are often the most satisfied while the government is the most unjust and oppressive. In all civil dissensions, we find the wealthy lead forth the idle and dissolute poor, against the honest and industrious; and generally with success; because the numbers are greater in calamitous times; because this party has ready at hand the means of equipment; because the young and active, never prone to reflexion, are influenced more by the hope of a speedy fortune than by the calculation of a slower; and because there are few so firm and independent as not to rest willingly on patronage, or as not to preferr that of the most potent.

In writing on government, we ought not only to search for what is best, but for what is practicable. Plato has done neither, nor indeed has he searched at all; instead of it he has thought it sufficient to stud a plain argument with an endless variety of bright and prominent topics. Now diversity of topics has not even the merit of invention in all cases: he is the most inventive who finds most to say upon one subject, and renders all of it applicable and useful. Splendid things

are the most easy to find and the most difficult to manage. If I order a bridle for my horse, and he of whom I order it brings me rich trappings in place of it, do I not justly deem it an importunate and silly answer to my remonstrances, when he tells me that the trappings are more costly than the bridle?

Be assured, my Callisthenes, I speak not from any disrespect to a writer so highly and so justly celebrated. I wish so extraordinary a man, as he, had been equally exempt from contemptuousness and malignity. We have conversed at other times on his conduct toward Xenophon, and indeed toward all the other more eminent disciples of Socrates. I had collected the documents on which I formed an exact account of the most flourishing states, and of the manners, laws, and customs, by which they were so, being of opinion that no knowledge is so useful to a commonwealth as this. I had also, as you remember, drawn up certain rules for poetry, taking my examples from Homer principally, and from our great dramatists. Plato immediately forms a republic in the clouds, to overshadow all mine at once, and descends only to kick the poets through the streets. Homer, the chief object of my contemplation, is the chief object of his attack. I acknowledge that the lower

and middle order of poets are in general the worst members of society: but the energies which exalt one to the higher, enable him not only to adorn but to protect his country. Plato says, the gods are degraded by Homer: yet Homer has omitted those light and ludicrous tales of them, which rather suit the manners of Plato than his. He thought about the gods, I suspect, just as you and I do, and cared as little how Homer treated them: yet, with the prison of Socrates before his eyes, and his own Dialogues under them, he had the cruelty to cast forth this effusion against the mild Euripides. His souls and their occupancy of bodies are not to be spoken of with gravity, and, as I am inclined for the present to keep mine where it is, I will be silent on the subject.

CALLISTHENES.

I must inform you, my friend and teacher, that your Macedonian pupil is like to interrupt your arrangements in that business. I am informed, and by those who are always credible in such assertions, that, without apologies, excuses, and prostrations, Aristoteles will follow the shades of Clitus and Parmenio. There is nothing of which Alexander is not jealous; no, not even eating and drinking. If any great work is to be destroyed, he must do it with his own hands. After he had

burned down the palace of Cyrus, the glory of which he envied a strumpet, one Polemarchus thought of winning his favour by destroying the tomb: he wept for spite and hanged him. Those who are jealous of power, are so from a consciousness of strength: those who are jealous of wisdom, are so from a consciousness of wanting it. Weakness has its fever... but you appear grave and thoughtful.

ARISTOTELES.

The barbarians no more interest me than a shoal of fishes.

CALLISTHENES.

I entertain the same opinion.

ARISTOTELES.

Of their rulers equally?

CALLISTHENES.

Yes, certainly; for amongst them there can be no other distinction than in titles and in dress. A Persian and a Macedonian, an Alexander and a Darius, if they oppress the liberties of Greece, are one.

ARISTOTELES.

Now, Callisthenes! if Socrates and Anytus were in the same chamber, if the wicked had mixed poison for the virtuous, the active in evil for the active in good, and some divinity had placed it in

your power to present the cup to either, and, touching your head, should say, *This head also is devoted to the Eumenides if the choice be wrong*, what would you resolve?

CALLISTHENES.

To do that by command of the god which I would likewise have done without it.

ARISTOTELES.

Bearing in mind that a myriad of kings and conquerors is not worth the myriadth part of a wise and virtuous man, return, Callisthenes, to Babylon, and see that your duty be performed.

CONVERSATION XVII.

HENRY VIII

AND

ANNE BOLEYN.

HENRY VIII

AND

ANNE BOLEYN.

HENRY.

Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? Blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband, after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why! verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whey faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. Hast had water enough upon thee? take that then . . . art thyself again?

ANNE.

Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth! do I behold my beloved lord . . . in peace . . . and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss! It was his voice. I

cannot see him . . . why cannot I? O why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed!

HENRY.

Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that: Nanny, thou art a sweet slut*: thou groanest,

* Henry was not unlearned, nor indifferent to the costlier externals of a gentleman, but in manners and language he was hardly on a level with our ostlers of the present day. He was fond of bearbaitings and other such amusements in the midst of the rabble, and would wrestle with Francis I. His reign is one continued proof, flaring and wearisome as a Lapland summer-day, that even the English form of government, under a sensual king with money at his disposal, may serve only to legitimatize injustice. The Constitution was still insisted on, in all its original strength and purity, by those who had abolished many of its fundamental laws, and had placed the remainder at the discretion of the king. It never has had a more zealous advocate than Empson. This true patriot of legitimacy requested on his trial, that, "if he and Dudley were punished, it might not be divulged to other nations, lest they should inferr that the final dissolution of the English government was approaching."

On the government and king, only one opinion now subsists: the government was whatever the king ordered; and the king was a ferocious and terrific thing, swinging on high between two windy superstitions, and caught and propelled alternately by Fanaticism and Lust. But perhaps there are some who, from malignity or scanty knowledge, doubt the innocence of Anne Boleyn. In fact she was too innocent for her station. The frank and unsuspicious gaiety of her temper, the restless

wench: art in labour? Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

ANNE.

God preserve your Highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence: my eyes were heavy; I fell asleep while I was reading; I did not know of your presence at first, and when I did I could not speak. I strove for utterance; I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

HENRY.

My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt then lie! thou wert reading and aloud too, with thy saintly

playfulness of high spirits, which we often saw formerly in the families of country gentlemen, first captivated the affections and afterward raised the jealousy of Henry. There is no instance in any public trial (not even where the defendent was acquitted) of accusations so improbable and ill-supported. Those who entertain no doubt whatever of her purity, acknowledge her indiscretion: but if indiscretion is removed from all indecency, from all injury to others, why censure it? What they call indiscretion in an unfortunate queen they would call affability in a fortunate one. Lightness of spirits, which had made all about her happy the whole course of her life, made her so the last day of it. Nothing I have written or could write on her, is so affecting as the few words she spoke to the constable of the tower, "*laughing heartily.*" She was beheaded on the nineteenth of May, and Henry on the morrow married Jane Seymour.

cup of water by thee, and ... what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

ANNE.

I had no other fruit to offer your Highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these: may I present them, such as they are? we shall have fresh next month.

HENRY.

Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

ANNE.

Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried*; I am still weak and liable to swoons.

HENRY.

Thou hast however thy bridal cheeks, with

* Anne Boleyn miscarried of a son January the twenty-ninth, 1536: the king concluded from this event that his marriage was disagreeable to God. He had abundance of conclusions for believing that his last marriage was disagreeable to God, whenever he wanted a fresh one, and was ready in due time to give up this too with the same resignation; but he never had any *conclusions* of doing a thing disagreeable to God when a divorce or decapitation was in question. Cruelty, which, if not the only sin, is certainly the greatest, has been overlooked as one altogether by the zealots of religion.

lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips, resisting all impression: but, now thou talkest about miscarrying, who is the father of that boy?

ANNE.

Yours and mine... he who has taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

HENRY.

Pagan, or worse, to talk so! He did not come into the world alive: there was no baptism.

ANNE.

I thought only of our loss: my senses are still confounded. I did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly; for I often fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

HENRY.

No subterfuges and escapes... I warrant, thou canst not say, whether at my enterance, thou wert waking or wandering.

ANNE.

Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

HENRY.

Well, since thou really and truly sleepedst, what didst dream of?

ANNE.

I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

HENRY.

Ha! false one... never two sentences of truth together... but come, what didst think about, asleep or awake?

ANNE.

I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto him.

HENRY.

And nothing more?

ANNE.

That all my prayers had been heard, and that all my wishes were accomplishing: the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

HENRY.

Vexatious little devil! she says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness... Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery?

ANNE.

If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon: but if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

HENRY.

Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton; hast thou not?

ANNE.

He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your Highness.

HENRY.

And Brereton and Norris, what have they taught thee?

ANNE.

They are your servants, and trusty ones.

HENRY.

Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee?

ANNE.

Yes; and...

HENRY.

What didst thou?

ANNE.

I defied him.

HENRY.

Is that all?

ANNE.

I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then indeed I should have incurred more justly the reproaches of your Highness: I should have smiled.

HENRY.

We have proofs abundant: they shall one and all confront thee... ay, clap thy hands and kiss my sleeve, harlot!

ANNE.

O that so great a favour is vouchsafed me! my honour is secure; my husband will be happy again; he will see my innocence.

HENRY.

Give me now an account of the monies thou hast received from me, within these nine months: I want them not back: they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds within that period, without even thy asking; what hast done with it, wanton?

ANNE.

I have regularly placed it out to interest.

HENRY.

Where? I demand of thee.

ANNE.

Among the needy and ailing. My lord archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly *:

* The duke of Norfolk obtained an order that the archbishop of Canterbury should retire to his palace of Lambeth on the queen's trial Burnet says that she had distributed, in the last nine months of her life, between fourteen and fifteen thousand pounds among the poor; a sum equal in value to nearly ten times the amount at present. It tends to prove how little she could have reserved for vanities or for favorites.

I also had a copy myself: those who took away my papers may easily find it, for there are few others, and all the rest lie open.

HENRY.

Think on my munificence to thee; recollect who made thee... dost sigh for what thou hast lost?

ANNE.

I do indeed.

HENRY.

I never thought thee ambitious; but thy vices creep out one by one.

ANNE.

I do not regrett that I have been a queen and am no wno longer so, nor that my innocence is called in question by those who never knew me: but I lament that the good people, who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation, check them when they speak about me; and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion, is my accuser.

HENRY.

Wast thou conning over something in that dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

ANNE.

This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely, in so many hundred years, there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness: not perchance doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever honoured and served faithfully . . . that indeed I did not look for, nor think of; but my heart was bounding for any one I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone, but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband, it is so heavenly a thing . . .

HENRY.

To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

ANNE.

I said not so: but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, shew us at least the semblances of weeping: and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, or of the waters and skies around it, without a similitude to our joys or sorrows.

HENRY.

I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it something of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain: it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and phrenzy strike out many things, which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never redd any thing but bible and history, the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behoves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink, of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt, greatly more doth it behove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will: we must take care that this movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

ANNE.

O my dear husband, God is very good-natured, if you will let him be so: It must be a naughty thing

indeed that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive any one? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

HENRY.

Resemble God perfectly and easily! do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

ANNE.

No, Henry, when his creatures talk thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good they love him, and when they love him, they are good themselves. O Henry! my husband and king! the judgments of God are righteous: on this surely we all must think alike.

HENRY.

And what then? speak out... again I command thee, speak plainly... thy tongue was not so torpid but this moment.

ANNE.

If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business; should it haply seem possible to you that passion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding, do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

HENRY.

What! thou wouldst fain change thy quarters, ay?

ANNE.

My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall change them shortly, whatever your Highness may determine.

HENRY.

Yet thou appearest hale and resolute, and (they tell me) smirkest and smilest to them all.

ANNE.

The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; and I have heard stories of the breeze, in other climates, that sets in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how refreshing. My heart indeed is now sustained strangely: it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness, from those about me, gives me satisfaction and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me; yet I was never an ingrate. What pains have I taken to find out the village-girls, who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning! how gladly would I have recom-

pensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birth-night, which else had warmed him half the winter! But these are times past: I was not queen of England.

HENRY.

Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

ANNE.

God be praised!

HENRY.

Learned saint, thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform me about the graver of them.

ANNE.

Which may it be, my liege?

HENRY.

Which may it be, pestilence! I marvel that the walls of this tower do not crack around us at such impiety.

ANNE.

I would be instructed by the wisest of theologians: such is your Highness.

HENRY.

Are the sins of the body, foul as they are, comparable to those of the soul?

ANNE.

When they are united they must be worst.

HENRY.

Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own breast against the sword: God has deprived thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I must hear more; procede, I charge thee.

ANNE.

An aptitude to believe one thing rather than another, from ignorance or weakness, or from the more persuasive manner of the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from the strong impression of a particular text at a particular time, and various things besides, may influence and decide our opinion; and the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will fall gently on human fallibility.

HENRY.

Opinion in matters of faith! rare wisdom! rare religion! Troth! Anne, thou hast well sobered me: I came rather warmly and lovingly; but those light ringlets, by the holy rood, shall not shade this shoulder much longer. Nay, do not start; I tapp it for the last time, my sweetest. If the Church permitted it, thou shouldst set forth on the long journey with the eucharist between thy teeth, however loth.

ANNE.

Love your Elizabeth, my honoured Lord, and

God bless you! She will soon forget to call me: do not chide her; think how young she is *.

Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it would comfort my heart... or break it.

* Elizabeth was not quite three years old at her mother's death, being born the seventh of September 1533.

It does not appear that the Defender of the Faith brought his wife to the scaffold for the good of her soul, nor that she was pregnant at the time, which would have added much to the merit of the action, as there is the probability that the child would have been heretical. Casper Scioppius, who flourished in the same century, says, in his *Classicum belli sacri,* that the children of heretics should not be pardoned, lest, if they grow up, they be implicated in the wickedness of their parents, and perish eternally.

Literature and Religion seem to have been contending one hundred years unintermittingly, which of them should be most efficient in banishing all humanity and all civility from the world, the very things which it was their business to propagate and preserve, and without which they not only are useless but pernicious. Scioppius stood as bottle-holder to both, in all their most desperate attacks. He, who was so munificent to children, in little faggots, little swords, and little halters, gave also a *christmas-box* to our king James I. *Alexi-*

pharmacum regium felli draconum et veneno aspidum, sub Philippi Mornæi de Plessis nuperâ papatûs historiâ abdito, appositum, et serenissimo Domino, Jacobo Magnæ Britanniæ regi, strenæ Januariæ *loco, muneri missum.* From the inexhaustible stores of his generosity, he made another such present to this monarch: *Collyrium Regium, Britanniæ regi, graviter ex oculis laboranti, muneri missum.*

Sir Henry Wootton, who found him in Madrid, to requite him for his christmas-box and box of eye-salve, ordered him to be whipt without a metaphor; on which Lavanda says, Quid Hispane calleat Scioppius haud scio; si quid tamen istius linguæ in ipso fuit, tunc opinor exseruit maxime quando in Hispaniâ Anglice vapulavit.

The remedies of Henry were more infallible, and his gifts more royal.

CONVERSATION XVIII.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

AND

HIS BROTHER QUINCTUS.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

AND

HIS BROTHER QUINCTUS.

MARCUS.

THE last calamities of our country, my brother Quinctus, have again united us; and something like the tenderness of earlier days appears to have returned, in the silence of ambition and in the subsidence of hope. It has frequently occurred to me how different we all are, from the moment when the parental roof bursts asunder, as it were, and the inmates are scattered abroad, and build up here and there new families. Many, who before lived in amity and concord, are then in the condition of those who, on receiving the intelligence of some shipwreck on the shore, collect together busily for plunder, and quarrel on touching the first fragment.

QUINCTUS.

We never disagreed on the division of any property, unless indeed the state and its honours may be considered as such; and altho in regard to Cesar, our fortune drew us different ways latterly, and my gratitude made me, until your remonstrances and prayers prevailed, reluctant to abandon him, you will remember my anxiety to procure you the consulate and the triumph. You cannot and never could suppose me unmindful of the signal benefits and high distinctions I have received from Cesar, or quite unreluctant to desert an army, for my services in which he often praised me to you, both while I was in Britain and in Gaul. Such moreover was his generosity, he did not erase my name from his Commentaries, for having abandoned and opposed his cause. My joy therefor ought not to be unmingled at his violent death, to whom I am indebted not only for confidence and command, not only for advancement and glory, but also for immortality. When you yourself had resolved on leaving Italy, to follow Cneius Pompeius, you were sensible, as you told me, that my obligations to Cesar should at least detain me in Italy. Our disputes, which among men who reason will be frequent, were always amicable. Our political views have always been similar, and ge-

nerally the same. You indeed were somewhat more aristocratical and senatorial; and this prejudice has ruined both. As if the immortal Gods took a pleasure in confounding us by the difficulty of our choice, they placed the best men at the head of the worst cause. Decimus Brutus and Porcius Cato held up the train of Sylla; for the late civil wars were only a continuation, of those which the old dictator seemed, for a time, to have extinguished in blood and ruins. His faction was in authority when you first appeared at Rome: and altho among your friends, and sometimes in public, you have spoken as a Roman should speak of Caius Marius, a respect for Pompeius, the most insincere of men, made you silent on the merits of Sertorius; than whom there never was a better man in private life, a magistrate more upright, a general more vigilant, a citizen more zealous for the prerogative of our republic. Caius Cesar, the later champion of the same party, overcame difficulties almost equally great, and, having acted upon a more splendid theatre, may perhaps appear at a distance a still greater character.

MARCUS.

He will seem so to those only, who place temperance and prudence, fidelity and patriotism, aside from the component parts of greatness. Cesar, of

all men, knew best when to trust fortune: Sertorius never trusted her at all, nor marched a step along a path he had not explored. The best of Romans slew the one, the worst the other: the death of Cesar was that which the wise and virtuous would most deprecate for themselves and their children; that of Sertorius what they would most desire. And since, Quinctus, we have seen the ruin of our country, and her enemies are intent on ours, let us be grateful that the last years of life have neither been useless nor inglorious, and that it is likely to close, not under the condemnation of such citizens as Cato and Brutus, but as Lepidus and Antonius. It is with more sorrow than asperity that I reflect on Caius Cesar. O! had his heart been unambitious as his style, had he been as prompt to succour his country as to enslave her, how great, how incomparably great, were he! Then perhaps at this hour, O Quinctus, and in this villa, we should have enjoyed his humorous and erudite discourse; for no man ever tempered so seasonably and so justly the materials of conversation. How graceful was he! how unguarded! His whole character was uncovered; as we represent the bodies of heroes and of gods. Two years ago, at this very season, on the third of the Saturnalia, he came hither, spontaneously and unex-

pectedly, to dine with me; and altho one of his attendents read to him, as he desired, while he was bathing, the verses on him and Mamurra, he retained his usual good-humour, and discoursed after dinner on many points of literature, with admirable ease and judgement. Him I shall see again; and, while he acknowledges my justice, I shall acknowledge his virtues, and contemplate them unclouded. I shall see again our father, and Mutius Scevola, and you, and our sons, and the ingenuous and faithful Tyro. He alone has power over my life, if any has; for to him I confide my writings. And our worthy Marcus Brutus will meet me, whom I will embrace among the first: for, if I have not done him an injury, I have caused him one. Had I never lived, or had I never excited his envy, he might perhaps have written as I have done; but, for the sake of avoiding me, he caught both cold and fever. Let us pardon him; let us love him: with a weakness that injured his eloquence, and with a softness of soul that sapped the constitution of our state, he is no unworthy branch of that family, which will be remembered the longest among men.

O happy day, when I shall meet my equals, and when my inferiors shall trouble me no more!

Man thinks it miserable to be cut off in the

midst of his projects: he should rather think it miserable to have formed them: for the one is his own action, the other is not; the one was subject from the beginning to disappointments and vexations, the other ends them. And what truly is that period of life in which we are not in the midst of our projects? They spring up only the more rank and wild, year after year, from their extinction or from their change of form, as herbage from the corruption and dying down of herbage.

I will not dissemble that I upheld the senatorial cause, for no other reason than that my dignity was to depend on it. Had the opposite party been triumphant, and the senate been abolished, I should never have had a Catilinarian conspiracy to quell, and few of my orations would have been delivered. Without a senate what Verres?...

QUINCTUS.

Do you believe that the Marian faction would have annulled our order?

MARCUS.

I believe that their safety would have required its ruin, and that their vengeance, not to say their equity, would have accomplished it. The civil war was of the senate against the equestrian order and the people, and was maintained by the wealth of the patricians, accumulated in the time of Sylla,

by the proscription of all whom violence made, or avarice called, its adversaries. It would have been necessary to confiscate the whole property of the order, and to banish its members from Italy. Any measures short of these would have been inadequate to compensate the people for their losses; nor would there have been a sufficient pledge for the maintenance of tranquility. The exclusion of three hundred families from their estates, which they had acquired in great part by rapine, and their expulsion from a country which they had inundated with blood, would have prevented that partition-treaty, whereby are placed in the hands of three men the properties and lives of all.

There should in no government be a contrariety of interests. Checks are useful: but it is better to stand in no need of them. Bolts and bars are good things: but would you establish a college of thieves and robbers to try how good they are? Misfortune has taught me many truths, which a few years ago I should have deemed suspicious and dangerous. The fall of Rome and of Carthage, the form of whose governments was almost the same, has been occasioned by the divisions of the ambitious in their senates: for we conscript fathers call that ambition which the lower ranks call avarice: in fact the only difference is, that

the one wears fine linen, the other coarse; one covets the government of Asia, the other a flask of vinegar. The people were indifferent which side prevailed, until their houses, in that country were reduced to ashes, in this were delivered to murderers and gamesters.

QUINCTUS.

Painful is it to reflect, that the greatness of nearly all men originates from what has been taken by fraud or violence out of the common stock. The greatness of states, on the contrary, depends on the subdivision of property, chiefly of the landed, in very moderate portions; on the frugal pay of all functionaries, chiefly of those who possess a property; and on unity of interests and designs in all classes. Where provinces are allotted, not for the public service, but for the enrichment of private families, where consuls wish one thing and tribunes wish another, how can there be prosperity or safety? If Carthage, whose government (as you observe) much resembled ours, had allowed the same rights to all the inhabitants of Africa, had she been as zealous in civilizing as in coercing them, she would have ruined our commonwealth and ruled the world. Rome found all the rest of Italy more cultivated than herself, but corrupted for the greater part by luxury, ignorant

of military science, and more patient of slavery than of toil. She conquered; and in process of time infused into them somewhat of her spirit, and imparted to them somewhat of her institutions. Nothing was then wanting to her policy, but only to grant voluntarily what she might have foreseen they would unite to enforce, and to have constituted a social body in Italy. This would have rendered her invincible. Ambition would not permitt our senators to divide with others the wealth and aggrandizement arising from authority: and hence our worst citizens are become our rulers. The same error was committed by Sertorius, but from purer principles. He created a senate in Spain, but admitted no Spaniard. The practice of disinterestedness, the force of virtue, in despite of so grievous an affront, united to him the bravest and most honorable of nations. If he had granted to them what was theirs by nature, and again due to them for benefits, he would have had nothing else to regrett, than that they had so often broken our legions, and covered our commanders with shame.

What could be expected in our country, where the aristocracy possessed, in the time of Sylla, more than half the land, and disposed of all the revenues and offices arising from our conquests? It would be idle to remark that our armies were paid out of

the latter, when those armies were but the household of the rich, and necessary to their safety. On such reasoning there is no clear profit, no property, no possession: we cannot eat without a cook, without a husbandman, without a butcher: these take a part of our money. The armies were no less the armies of the aristocracy than the money that paid them and the provinces that supplied it; no less, in short, than their beds and bolsters.

Why could not we have done from policy and equity, what has been and often will be done, under another name, by favour and iniquity? On the agrarian law we never were unanimous: yet Tiberius Gracchus had, among the upholders of his plan, the most prudent, the most equitable, and the most dignified, in the republic: Lelius, the friend of Scipio, whose wisdom and moderation you have lately so extolled in your dialogue; Crassus, then pontifex maximus; and Appius Claudius, resolved by this virtuous and patriotic deed, to wipe away the stain left for ages on his family, by its licentiousness, pride, and tyranny. To these names another must be added; a name which we have been taught from our youth upward to hold in reverence, the greatest of our jurists, Mutius Scevola. The adversaries of the measure cannot deny the humanity and liberality of its provisions, by

which namely those, who might be punished for violating the laws, should be indemnified for the loss of the very possessions they held illegally, and these possessions should be distributed among the poorer families; not for the purpose of corrupting their votes, but that they should have no temptation to sell them.

You smile, Marcus!

MARCUS.

For this very thing the Conscript Fathers were inimical to Tiberius Gracchus, and accused him of an attempt to introduce visionary and impracticable changes into the commonwealth. Among the elder of his partisans, some were called ambitious, some prejudiced; among the younger, some were madmen; the rest traitors; just as they were protected or unprotected by the power of their families or the influence of their friends.

QUINCTUS.

The most equitable and necessary law promulgated of latter times in our republic, was that by Caius Gracchus, who, finding all our magistratures in the disposal of the senate, and witnessing the acquittal of all criminals, whose peculations and extortions had ruined our provinces and shaken our dominion, transferred the judicial power to the equestrian order. Cepio's law, five-and-twenty years afterward, was an infringement of this; and

the oration of Lucius Crassus in its favour, bearing with it the force of genius and the stamp of authority, formed in great measure, as you acknowledge, both your politics and your eloquence. The intimacy of Crassus with Aculeo *, the husband of our maternal aunt, inclined you perhaps to follow the more readily his opinions, and to set a higher value, than you might otherwise have done, on his celebrated oration.

MARCUS.

You must remember, my brother, that I neither was nor professed myself to be adverse to every agrarian law, tho I opposed with all my energy and authority that agitated by Rullus. On which very occasion I represented the two Gracchi as most excellent men, inflamed by the purest love of the Roman people, in their proposal to divide among the citizens what was unquestionably their due. I mentioned them as those on whose wisdom and institutions many of the solider parts in our government were erected; and I opposed the particular law at that time laid before the people, as leading to the tyranny of a decemvirate. The projects of Cesar and Pompeius on this business were unjust and pernicious; those

* Cumque nos cum consobrinis nostris, Aculeonis filiis, et ea disceremus *quæ Crasso placerent* et iis doctoribus quibus ille uteretur erudiremur. *De Oratore*, i. 11.

of Gracchus I now acknowledge to have been equitable to the citizens and salutary to the state. Unless I made you this concession, how could I defend my own conduct a few months ago, in persuading the senate to distribute among the soldiers of the fourth legion, and the legion of Mars, for their services to the republic, those very lands in Campania, which Cesar and Pompeius would have divided and allotted in favour of their partisans in usurpation. Caius Gracchus, on the contrary, would look aside to no advantage or utility, and lost the most powerful of his friends, adherents, and relatives, by his rectitude and inflexibility. Besides those letters of his which are published, I remember one in answer to his mother, which Scevola was fond of quoting, and of which he possessed the original. The words of Cornelia, as well as I can recollect them, are these:

"I have received the determination of Lelius and of Scipio, in which they agree, as usual. He tells me that he never shall cease to be the advocate of so righteous a cause, if you will consent that the soldiers, who subdued for our republic the cities of Carthage and Numantia, shall partake in the public benefit: that Scipio is well aware how adverse the proposal would render the senate to him; and at the same time how unpopular he shall be among his fellow citizens at Rome, which may excite a

suspicion in bad and thoughtless men, that he would gratify the army in defiance of each authority. He requests you to consider, that these soldiers are for the greater part somewhat elderly; and that granting them possessions, on which they may sit down and rest, cannot be the means an ambitious man would take for his aggrandizement. He wishes to render them inclined to peace, not alert for disturbances, and as good citizens as they have been good soldiers; and he entreats you, by the sanctity of your office, not to deprive them of what they should possess in common with others, for no better reason than because they defended by their valour the property of all. If you assent to this proposal, it will be unnecessary for him, he says, to undertake the settlement of the Commonwealth, referred to him by the Senate, not without danger, my dear Caius, tho rather to his life than to his dignity. So desirable a measure, he adds, ought never to be carried into effect, nor supported too pertinaciously, by the general of an army."

QUINCTUS.

I never knew of this letter. Scevola, I imagine, would not give it out of his hands for any one to read, in public or at home. Do you remember as much of the answer?

MARCUS.

I think I may do: for the language of the Gracchi was among my exercises; and I wonder that you have not heard me rehearse both pieces, in the practice of declamation. Caius answers his mother thus:

"Mother, until you have exerted your own eloquence to persuade me, if indeed you participate in the opinions of Lelius, never shall I agree that the soldiers of Scipio have an allotment of land in Italy. If we withdraw our veterans from Spain and Africa, barbarian kings will tread upon our footsteps, efface the traces of our civilization, and obliterate the memorials of our glory. The countries will be useful to us: even if they never were to be so, we must provide against their becoming injurious and pernicious, as they would be under any other power. Either we should not fight an enemy, or we should fight until we have overcome him. Afterwards to throw away what we have taken, is the pettishness of a child; to drop it, is the imbecility of a suckling. Nothing of wantonness or of frowardness is compatible with warfare, or congenial with the Roman character. To relinquish a conquest is an acknowledgement of injustice, or incapacity, or fear.

"Our soldiers, under the command of Scipio,

have subdued two countries, of a soil more fertile than ours, and become by a series of battles, and by intestine discord, less populous. Let them divide and enjoy it. The beaten should always pay the expenses of the war, and the instigators should be deprived of their possessions and their lives. Which, I pray you, is the more reasonable; that the Roman people shall incurr debts by having conquered, or that the weight of those debts shall fall totally on the vanquished? Either the war was unjust against *them*, or the conditions of peace against *us*. Our citizens are fined and imprisoned (since their debts begin with fine and end with imprisonment) for having hurt them! What! shall we strike and run away? or shall our soldier, when he hath stript the armour from his adversary, say, *No, I will not take this: I will go to Rome, and suit myself with better!*

"Let the army be well compensated for its toils and perils: let it enjoy the fruit of its triumphs on the soil that bore them. Never will any new one keep the natives in such awe. Those who fight for slavery should at all events have it: they should be sold as bondsmen. The calamities of Carthage and of Numantia strike the bosom even of the conqueror. How many of the brave, how many of the free, how many of the wise and of the virtuous,

perished within their walls! But the petty princes and their satellites should be brought to market: not one of them should have a span of earth, or a vest, or a carcase, of his own. Spaniards and Africans, who preferr the domination of a tetrarch to the protection of the laws, ought to be sold for the benefit of our legionaries in Spain and Africa, whether by the gang or the dozen, whether for the mine or the arena. While any such are still in existence, and while their country, of which they are unworthy, opens regions inexplored before us, and teeming with fertility, I will not permitt that the victorious army partake in the distribution of our home-domains. Write this to Lelius; and write it for Scipio's information; imploring him so to act as that he never may enfeeble the popular voice, nor deaden the world's applause. Remind him, O mother, for we both love him, how little it would become a good citizen, and brave soldier, to raise up any cause why he should have to guard himself, against the suspicions and strategems of the senate."

QUINCTUS.

The attempt to restore the best and wisest of our ancient customs, was insolently and falsely called innovation: for, from the foundation of our city, a part of the conquered lands was sold by auction

under the spear; an expression which has since been used to designate the same transaction when within the walls; another part was holden in common; a third was leased out at an easy rate to the poorer citizens. So that formerly the lower and intermediate class possessed, by right, almost the exclusive benefit of *two thirds*, and an equal chance (wherever there was industry and frugality) to the other. Latterly, by various kinds of vexation and oppression, they had been deprived of nearly the whole.

Cornelia was not a woman of a heart so sickly-tender, as to awaken its sympathies at all hours, and to excite and pamper in it a false appetite. Like the rest of her family, she cared little or nothing for the applauses and opinions of the people: she loved justice; and it was on justice that she wished her children to lay the foundations of their glory. This ardour was inextinguished in her by the blood of her elder son. She saw his name placed where she wished it; and she pointed it out to Caius. Scandalous words may be written on the wall under it, by dealers in votes and traffickers in loyalty; but little is the worth of a name that perishes by chalk or charcoal.

MARCUS.

The moral like the physical body has not always the same wants in the same degree. We put off

or on a greater or less quantity of cloathes, according to the season; and it is to the season that we must accommodate ourselves in government, wherin there are only a few leading principles which are never to be disturbed. I now perceive that the laws of society in one thing resemble the laws of perspective: they require that what is below should rise gradually, and that what is above should descend in the same proportion, but not that they should touch. Still less do they inform us, what is echoed in our ears by new masters from camp and schoolroom, that the wisest and best should depend on the weakest and worst; and that, when individuals, however ignorant of moral discipline and impatient of self-restraint, are deemed adequate to the management of their affairs at twenty years, a state should never be so; that boys should come out of pupilage, that men should return to it; that people in their actions and abilities so contemptible as the triumvirate, should become by their own appointment our tutors and guardians, and shake their scourges over Marcus Brutus, Marcus Varro, Marcus Tullius. The Romans are hastening back, I see, to the government of absolute kings, whether by that name or another is immaterial, which no virtuous and dignified man, no philosopher of whatever sect, has

recommended, approved, or tolerated, and than which no moralist, no fabulist, no visionary, no poet, satirical or comic, no Fescennine jester, no dwarf or eunuch (the most privileged of privileged classes), no runner at the side of a triumphal car, in the utmost extravagance of his licentiousness, has imagined any thing more absurd, more indecorous, or more insulting. What else indeed is the reason why a nation is called barbarous by the Greeks and us? This alone stamps the character upon it, standing for whatever is monsterous, for whatever is debased.

What a shocking sight should we consider an old father of a family, led in chains along the public street, with boys and prostitutes shouting after him! and should we not retire from it quickly and anxiously? A sight greatly more shocking now presents itself: an ancient nation is reduced to slavery, by those who vowed, before the people and before the altars, to defend her. And is it hard for us, O Quinctus, to turn away our eyes from this abomination? or is it necessary for a Gaul or an Illyrian to command us that we close them on it?

I am your host, my brother, and must recall you to pleasanter ideas. How beautiful is this Formian coast! how airy this villa! Ah whither

have I called back your reflexions! it is the last of ours perhaps we may ever see. Do you remember the races of our children along the sands, and their consternation when Tyro cried *the Læstrygons! the Læstrygons!* He little thought he prophesied in his mirth, and all that poetry has feigned of these monsters should in so few years be accomplished. The other evening, an hour or two before sunset, I sailed quietly along the coast, for there was little wind, and the stillness on shore made my heart faint within me. I remembered how short a time ago I had conversed with Cato in the walks around the villa of Lucullus, whose son, such was the modesty of the youth, followed rather than accompanied us. O Gods! how little then did I foresee or apprehend, that the guardianship of this young man, and of Cato's son, would within one year have devolved on me, by the most deplorable death of their natural protector. There is something of softness, not unallied to sorrow, in these mild winter days and their humid sunshine. I know not, Quinctus, by what train or connexion of ideas they lead me rather to the past than to the future; unless it be that, when the fibres of our bodies are relaxed, as they must be in such weather, the spirits fall back easily upon reflexion, and are slowly incited to expecta-

tion. The memory of those great men, who consolidated our republic by their wisdom, exalted it by their valour, protected and defended it by their constancy, stands not alone nor idly: they draw us after them, they place us with them. O Quinctus! I wish I could impart to you my firm persuasion, that after death we shall enter into their society: and what matters if the place of our reunion be not the capitol or the forum, be not Elysian meadows or Atlantic islands? Locality has nothing to do with mind once free. Carry this thought perpetually with you; and death, whether you believe it terminates our whole existence or otherwise, will lose, I will not say its terrors, for the brave and wise have none, but its anxieties and inquietudes.

QUINCTUS.

Brother, when I see that many dogmas in religion have been invented to keep the intellect in subjection, I may fairly doubt the rest.

MARCUS.

Yes, if any emolument be derived from them to colleges of priests. But surely he deserves the dignity and the worship of a god, who first instructed men that by their own volition they might enjoy eternal happiness; that the road to it is most easy and most beautiful, such as any

one would take by preference, even if nothing desirable were at the end of it. Neither to give nor take offence, are surely the two things most delightful in human life: and it is by these two things that eternal happiness may be attained. We shall enjoy a future state accordingly as we have employed our intellect and our affections. Perfect bliss can be expected by few: but still fewer will be so miserable as they have been here.

QUINCTUS.

A belief to the contrary, if we admitt a future life, would place the gods beneath us in their best properties, justice and beneficence.

MARCUS.

Belief in a future life is the appetite of reason: and I see not why we should not gratify it as unreluctantly as the baser. Religion does not call upon us to believe all the fables of the vulgar, but on the contrary to correct them.

QUINCTUS.

Otherwise, overrun as we are in Rome by foreners of all nations, and ready to receive, as we have been, the buffooneries of Syrian and Egyptian priests, our citizens may within a few years become not only the dupes, but the tributaries, of these impostors. The Syrian may scourge us until we join him in his lamentation of Adonis;

and the Egyptian may tell us that it is unholy to eat a chicken, and holy to eat an egg; while a sly rogue of Judea whispers in our ear, *That is superstition: you go to heaven if you pay me a tenth of your harvests.* This, I have heard Cneius Pompeius relate, is done in Judea.

MARCUS.

Yes, but the tenth paid all the expenses both of civil government and religious; for the magistracy was (if such an expression can be repeated with seriousness) *theocratical**. In time of peace a decimation of property would be intolerable: but the Jews have been always at war, natives of a sterile country and neighbours of a fertile one, acute, meditative, melancholy, morose. I know not whether we ourselves have performed such actions as they have, or whether any nation has fought with such resolution and pertinacity. We laugh at their worship; they abominate ours: in this I think we are the wiser; for surely on speculative points it is better to laugh than to abominate. But whence have you brought your eggs and chickens? I have

* The Spaniards had been a refractory and rebellious people, and therefor were treated, we may presume, with little lenity: yet T. Livius tells us that a part of Spain paid a *tenth*, another part a *twentieth*. Lib. xliii. See also Tacitus on the subject of Taxation Ann. xiii. and Burmann *de Vectigal.*

heard our Varro tell many stories about the Egyptian ordinances; but I do not remember this.

QUINCTUS.

Indeed the distinction seems a little too absurd, even for the worshipers of cats and crocodiles. Perhaps I may have wronged them: the nation I may indeed have forgotten, but I am certain of the fact. I place it in the archives of superstition; you may deposit it in its right cell. Among the Athenians the Priestess of Minerva was entitled to a measure of barley, a measure of wheat, and an obolus, on every birth and death*. Some eastern nations are so totally subjected to the priesthood, that a member of it is requisite at birth, at death, and, by Thalassius! at marriage itself: he can even inflict pains and penalties; he can oblige you to tell him all the secrets of the heart; he can call your wife to him, your daughter to him, your blooming and innocent son; he can absolve from sin; he can exclude from pardon.

MARCUS.

Now, Quinctus, egg and chicken, cat and crocodile, disappear and vanish: you repeat impossibilities: mankind, in its lowest degradation, has never been depressed so low. The savage would strangle the impostor that attempted it; the civi-

* Aristot. Oeconom. l. 2.

lized man would scourge him and hiss him from society. Come, come, brother! we may expect such a state of things, whenever we find united the genius of the Cimmerian and the courage of the Troglodyte. Religions wear out, cover them with gold or case them with iron, as you will. Jupiter is now less powerful in Crete than when he was in his cradle there, and spreads fewer terrors at Dodona than a shepherd's cur. Proconsuls have removed from Greece, from Asia, from Sicily, the most celebrated statues; and it is doubted at last whether those deities are in heaven, whom a cart and a yoke of oxen have carried away on earth. When the civil wars are over, and the minds of men become indolent and inactive, as is always the case after great excitement, it is not improbable that some novelties may be attempted in religion: but, as my prophesies in the course of all the late events have been accomplished, so you may believe me when I prognosticate that our religion, altho it should be disfigured and deteriorated, will continue in many of its features, in many of its pomps and ceremonies, the same. Sibylline books will never be wanting, while fear and curiosity are inherent in the composition of man. And there is something consolatory in this idea: for whatever be your philosophy, you must acknow-

ledge that it is pleasant to think, altho you know not wherefor, that, when we go away, things visible, and things also intellectual, will remain in great measure as we left them. A slight displeasure would be felt by us, if we were certain that after our death our houses would be taken down, tho not only no longer inhabited by us, but probably not destined to remain in the possession of our children; and that even these vineyards, fields, and gardens, were about to assume another aspect.

QUINCTUS.

The sea and the barren rocks will remain for ever as they are: whatever is lovely changes. Misrule and slavery may convert our fertile plains into pestilential marshes; and whoever shall exclame against the authors and causes of such devastation, may be proscribed, slain, or exiled. Enlightened and virtuous men, painfullest of thoughts! may condemn him: for a love of security accompanies a love of study, and that by degrees is adulation which was acquiescence. Cruel men have always at their elbow the supporters of arbitrary power; and altho the cruel are seldom solicitous in what manner they may be represented to posterity, yet, if any one amongst them be rather more so than is customary, some projector will whisper in his ear an advice like this. "Oppress,

fine, imprison, and torture, those who (you have reason to suspect) are or may be philosophers or historians: so that, if they mention you at all, they will mention you with indignation and abhorrence. Your object is attained: few will implicitly believe them; almost all will acknowledge that their faith should be suspected, as there are proofs that they wrote in irritation. This is better than if they spoke of you slightingly, or cursorily, or evasively. By employing a hangman extraordinary, you purchase in perpetuity the title of a clement prince."

MARCUS.

Quinctus, you make me smile, by bringing to my recollection that, among the marauders of Pindenissus, was a fellow called by the Romans Fœdirupa, from a certain resemblance no less to his name than to his character. He commanded in a desert and sandy district, which his father and granfather had enlarged by violence; for all the family had been robbers and assassins. Several schools had once been established in those parts, remote from luxury and seduction, and several good and learned men taught in them, having fled from Mithridates. Fœdirupa assumed on a sudden the air and demeanour of a patriot, and hired one Gentius to compose his rhapsodies on

the love of our country, with liberty to promise what he pleased. Gentius put two hundred pieces of silver on his mule, rode to the schools, exhibited his money, and promised the same gratuity to every scholar who would arm and march forth against the enemy. The teachers breathed a free and pure spirit, and, altho they well knew the knavery of Gentius, seconded him in his mission. Gentius, as was ordered, wrote down the names of those who repeated the most frequently that of country, and the least so that of Fœdirupa. Even rogues are restless for celebrity. The scholars performed great services against the enemy: on their return they were disarmed; the promises of Fœdirupa were disavowed; the teachers were thrown into prison, accused of violating the ancient laws, of perverting the moral and religious principles, and finally of abusing the simplicity of youth, by illusory and empty promises. Gentius drew up against them the bills of indictment, and offered to take care of their libraries and cellars while they remained in prison. Fœdirupa cast them all into dungeons; but, drawing a line of distinction much finer than the most subtile of them had ever done, *I will not kill them*, said he; *I will only frighten them to death.* He became at last rather less cruel . . . and starved them.

Only one was sentenced to lose his head: Gentius comforted him upon the scaffold, by reminding him how much worse he would have fared under Mithridates, who would not only have commanded his head to be cut off, but also to be carried on a pike, and by assuring him that, instead of such wanton barbarity, he himself would carry it to the widow and her children, within an hour after their conference at furthest. The last words moved him little; he hardly heard them: his heart and his brain throbbed in agony at the sound of children, of widow. He threw his head back; tears rolled over his temples, and dripped from his grey hair. *Ah my dear friend*, said Gentius, *have I unwittingly touched a tender part? be manful; dry your eyes; the children are yours no longer; why be concerned for what you can never see again? My good old friend*, added he, *how many kind letters to me has this ring of yours sealed formerly!* then, lifting up the hand, he drew it slowly off, overcome by an excess of grief, through which it fell into his bosom, and to moderate which he was forced to run away, looking as he fled through the corner of his eye at the executioner, who seemed to grudge his escape. The rogue was stoned to death by those he had betrayed, not long before

my arrival in the province; and an arrow from an unseen hand did justice on Fœdirupa.

I return amidst these home scenes.

On the promontory of Misenus is yet standing the mansion of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi; the same villa which Marius bought afterwards, and which our friend Lucullus last inhabited; and, whether from reverence of her virtues and exalted name, or that the Gods preserve it as a monument of womanhood, its exterior is unchanged. Here she resided many years, and never would be induced to revisit Rome, after the murder of her younger son. She cultivated a variety of flowers, and naturalized several plants, and brought together trees from vale and mountain, trees unproductive of fruit, but affording her, in their superintendence and management, a tranquil and expectant pleasure. We read that the Babylonians and Persians were formerly much addicted to similar places of recreation. I have no knowledge in these matters*; and the first time I went thither, I asked many questions of the gardener's boy, a child about nine years old.

* Cicero, in a letter to his brother, says, Item de hortis quod me admones, nec fui unquam valde cupidus, et nunc domus suppeditat mihi hortorum amœnitatem. Ad Q. Fratr. l. 3. ep. 4.

He thought me still more ignorant than I was, and said, among other such remarks, *I do not know what they call this plant at Rome, or whether they have it there; but it is among the commonest here, beautiful as it is, and we call it cytisus.*

Thank you, child! said I smiling; *and,* pointing toward two cypresses, *pray, what do you call those high and gloomy trees, at the extremity of the avenue, just above the precipice?*

Others like them, replied he, *are called cypresses; but these, I know not why, have always been called Tiberius and Caius.*

QUINCTUS.

Of all studies the most delightful and the most useful is biography. The seeds of great events lie near the surface; historians delve too deep for them. No history was ever true: but lives I have read which, if they were not so, had the appearance, the interest, and the utility of truth.

MARCUS.

I have collected facts about Cornelia, worth recording; and I would commemorate them the rather, as, while the Greeks have had amongst them no few women of abilities, we can hardly mention two.

QUINCTUS.

Yet ours have advantages which theirs had not. Did Cornelia die unrepining and contented?

MARCUS.

She was firmly convinced to the last, that an agrarian law would have been both just and beneficial; and was consoled that her illustrious sons had discharged at once the debt of nature and of patriotism. Glory is a light that shines from us on others, and not from others on us. She was assured that future ages would render justice to the memory of her children; but she thought they had already received the highest approbation, when they had received their own. If anything still was wanting, their mother gave it.

No stranger of distinction left Italy without a visit made to Cornelia. One would imagine that they, and that she particularly, would avoid the mention of her sons. It was however the subject on which she most delighted to converse, and which she never failed to introduce; on finding a worthy auditor. I have heard from our father and from Scevola, both of whom in their adolescence had been present on such occasions, that she mentioned her children, no longer indeed with the calm complacency and full content, with

which she shewed them to the lady of Campania as her gems and ornaments, but with such an exultation of delight at glory, as, in the generosity of her soul, she would the heroes of antiquity. So little of what is painful in emotion did she exhibit at the recital, those who could not comprehend her magnanimity, at first believed her maddened by her misfortunes; but so many signs of wisdom soon displayed themselves, such staidness and sedateness of demeanour, such serene majestic suavity, they felt as if some deity were present; and when wonder and admiration and awe permitted them to lift up their eyes again toward her, they discovered from her's that the fondest of mothers had been speaking...the mother of the Gracchi.

Your remark, on the preeminence of biography over history, is just; and yet how far below the truth is even the best representation of those upon whose minds the Gods have looked down graciously, and the Muses have vouchsafed to descend! How much greater would the greatest man appear, if any one about him could perceive those innumerable filaments of thought, which break as they arise from the brain, and the slenderest of which is worth all the wisdom of many, at whose discretion lies the felicity of nations! This in

itself is impossible; but there are fewer who consider and contemplate what comes in sight, as it were, and disappears again (such is the conversation of the wise), than who calculate those stars that are now coming forth above us: scarcely one in several millions can apportion, to what is exalted in mind, its magnitude, place, and distance. We must be contented to be judged by that which people can discern and handle: that which they can have amongst them most at leisure, is most likely to be well examined and duly estimated. Whence I am led to believe that my writings, and those principally which instruct men in their rights and duties, will obtain me a solider and more extensive reputation than I could have acquired in public life, by busier and harder and more anxious labours. Public men appear to me to live in that delusion, which, Socrates in the *Phedo* would persuade us, is common to all our species. *We live in holes,* says he, *and fancy that we are living in the highest parts of the earth.* What he says physically, I would say morally: judge whether my observation is not at least as reasonable as his hypothesis; and indeed, to speak ingenuously, whether I have not converted what is physically false and absurd into what is morally true and important.

QUINCTUS.

True, beyond a question, and important as those whom it concerns will let it be. They who stand in high stations, wish for higher; but they who have occupied the highest of all, often think with regret of some more pleasant one which they have left below. Servius Tullius, a prudent man, dedicated to Fortune what we call the narrow temple, with a statue in proportion, expressing, no doubt, his idea, that Fortune in the condition of mediocrity, is more reasonably than in any other the object of our vows. He could have given her as magnificent a name, and as magnificent a residence, as any she possesses; you know she has many of both: but he wished perhaps to try whether for once she would be as favorable to wisdom as to enterprise *.

MARCUS.

If life allows us time for the experiment, let us also try it †.

* Plutarch, in his *Problems*, offers several reasons, all different from this.

† That Cicero in his later days began to think a private life preferable to a public, and that his philosophical no less than his political opinions were unstable, is shewn in few places so evidently and remarkably, as in the eighth book of his epistles.

"Nam omnem nostram de republicâ curam, cogitationem

Sleep, which the Epicureans and others have represented as the image of death, is, we know, the repairer of activity and strength. If they spoke reasonably and consistently, they might argue from their own principles, or at least take the illustration from their own fancy, that death

de dicendâ in senatu sententiâ, &c., abjecimus, et in Epicuri nos, adversarii nōstri, castra, conjecimus."

Cicero had not the courage to pursue his happiness when he saw clearly where it lay. Several years before the writing of this letter, he says to Atticus in one dated from the villa of Pompeius, "Malo in illâ tuâ sediculâ quam habes sub imagine Aristotelis sedere, quam in istorum sellâ curuli, tecumque apud te ambulari quam cum eo quocum video esse ambulandum: sed de ista ambulatione sors viderit, aut siquis est qui curet deus." L. iv. E. ix.

Demosthenes in his later days entertained the same opinion. He said that, if there were two roads, the one leading to government, the other to death, a prudent man would choose the latter.

The most wonderful thing in human nature is the variance of knowledge and will, where no passion is the stimulant? whence that system of life is often chosen and persevered in, which, a man is well convinced, is neither the best for him nor the easiest. Every action must have its motive; but weak motives are sufficient for weak minds; and whenever we see one which we believed a stronger moved habitually by what appears inadequate, we may be certain that there is, to bring a metaphor from the forest, more top than root.

like sleep may also restore our powers, and in proportion to its universality and absoluteness. Their fancy loves rather to brood over an abyss, than to expatiate on places of amenity and composure. Just as sleep is the renovator of corporeal vigour, so, with their permission, I would believe death to be of the mind's; and that the body, to which it is attached rather from habitude than from reason, is little else than a disease to our immortal spirit; that, like the remora, of which mariners tell marvels, it counteracts, as it were, both oar and sail, in the most strenuous advances we can make toward virtue and felicity. Shall we lament to feel this reptile drop off? Shall we not, on the contrary, leap with alacrity on shore, and offer up in gratitude to the Gods whatever is left about us uncorroded and unshattered? A broken and abject mind is the thing least worthy of their acceptance.

QUINCTUS.

Brother, you talk as if there were a plurality of Gods.

MARCUS.

I know not and care not how many there may be of them. Philosophy points to unity: but while we are here, we speak as those do who are around us, and employ in these matters the lan-

guage of our country. Italy is not so fertile in hemlock as Greece; yet a wise man will dissemble half his wisdom on such a topic: and I, as you remember, adopting the means of dialogue, have delivered my opinions in the voice of others, and speak now as custom not as reason leads me.

QUINCTUS.

Marcus, I still observe in you somewhat of aversion to Epicurus, a few of whose least important positions you have controverted in your dialogues: and I wish that, even there, you had been rather less irrisory, less of a pleader, and had been in dispassionate urbanity his follower. Such was also the opinion of two men the most opposite in all other things, Brutus and Cesar. Religions may fight in the street or over the grave, Philosophies never should. We ought to forego the manners of the forum in our disquisitions, which if they continue to be agitated as they have been, will be designated at last not only by foul epithets, drawn from that unsober tub, but, as violence is apt to increase in fury until it falls from exhaustion, by those derived from war and bloodshed. I should not be surprised, if they who write and reason on our calm domestic duties, on our highest and eternal interests, should hereafter be designated by some such terms as *polemical* and *sarcastic*, and even by quiet men, conveying no

reproof. Our animosities are excited by contention; they would be allayed by conference. Were it possible for you to have spent an hour with Epicurus, you would have been delighted with him; for his nature was very like the better part of your's. Zeno set out from an opposite direction, yet they meet at last and shake hands. He who shews us how Fear may be reasoned with and pacified, how Death may be disarmed of all his terrors, how Pleasure may be united with Innocence and with Constancy; he who persuades us firmly that Vice is painful and vindictive, and that Ambition, deemed the most manly of our desires, is the most childish and illusory, deserves our gratitude. Children would fall asleep before they had trifled so long as grave men do. If you must quarrel with Epicurus on the principal good, take my idea. The happy man is he who distinguishes the boundary between desire and delight, and stands firmly on the higher ground; he who knows that pleasure not only is not possession, but is often to be lost and always to be endangered by it. In life, as in those prospects, which, if the sun were above the horizon, we should see from hence, the objects covered with the softest light, and offering the most beautiful forms in the distance, are wearisome to attain, and barren.

In one of your last letters, you told me that

you had come over into the camp of your old adversary, Epicurus.

MARCUS.

I could not rest with him. As we pardon those reluctantly who destroy our family tombs, is it likely or reasonable that he should be forgiven, who levels to the ground the fabric to which they lead, and to which they are only a rude and temporary vestibule?

QUINCTUS.

Socrates was heard with more attention, Pythagoras had more authority in his lifetime; but no philosopher hath excited so much enthusiasm, in those who never frequented, never heard nor saw him: and yet his doctrines are not such in themselves as would excite it. How then can it be? otherwise than partly from the innocence of his life, and partly from the relief his followers experienced, in abstraction from unquiet and insatiable desires. Many, it is true, have spoken of him with hatred: but among his haters are none who knew him; which is remarkable, singular, wonderful: for hatred seems as natural to men as hunger is, and excited like hunger by the presence of its food; and the more exquisite the food, the more excitable is the hunger.

MARCUS.

I do not remember to have met anywhere be-

fore with the thought you have just expressed. Certain it is however that men in general have a propensity to hatred, profitless as it is and painful. We say proverbially, after Ennius, or some other old poet, the descent to Avernus is easy: not less easily are we carried down to the more pestiferous pool, wherinto we would drag our superiors and submerge them. It is the destiny of the obscure to be despised; it is the privilege of the illustrious to be hated. Whoever hates me, proves and feels himself to be less than I am. If in argument we can make a man angry with us, we have drawn him from his ground and overcome him. For he who, in order to attack a little man (and every one calls his adversary so) ceases to defend the truth, shews that truth is less his object than the little man. I profess the tenets of the new Academy, because it teaches us modesty in the midst of wisdom, and leads thro doubt to inquiry. Hence it appears to me, that it must render us quieter and more studious without doing what Epicurus would do; that is, without singing us to sleep in groves and meadows, while our country is calling on us loudly to defend her. Nevertheless I have lived in the most familiar way with Epicureans, as you know, and have loved them affectionately. There is no more certain sign of a narrow mind, of stupidity, and

of arrogance, than to stand aloof from those who think otherwise. If they have weighed the matter in dispute as carefully, it is equitable to suppose that they have the same chance as we have of being in the right: if they have not done so, we may just as reasonably be out of humour with our footman or chairman; he is more ignorant and more careless of it still.

I have seen reason to change the greater part of my opinions. Let me confess to you, Quinctus, we oftener say things because we can say them well than because they are sound and reasonable. One would imagine that every man in society knows the nature of friendship. Similarity in the disposition, identity in the objects liked and disliked, have been stated as the essence of it: nothing is untruer. Titus Pomponius and myself are different in our sentiments, our manners, our habits of life, our ideas of men and things, our topics of study, our sects of philosophy; added to which our country and companions have these many years been wide apart: yet we are friends, and always were so, and, if man can promise any thing beyond the morrow, always shall be.

QUINCTUS.

Your *idem velle atque idem nolle* has never been suspected; not even by those who have seen Marius and Sylla, Cesar and Pompeius, at

variance and at war, for no other reason than because they sought and shunned the same thing; shunning privacy and seeking supremacy. Young men quote the sentence daily; those very young men perhaps who court the same mistress, and whose friendship not only has not been corroborated, but has been shattered and torne up by it. Few authors have examined any one thing well, scarcely one many things. Your dialogues are wiser I think than those of the Greeks; certainly more animated and more varied; but I doubt whether you have bestowed so much time and labour on any question of eternal interest to mankind, as on pursuing a thief like Verres, or scourging a drunkard like Piso, or drawing the nets of Vulcan over the couch of Clodius. For which reason I should not wonder if your Orations were valued by posterity more highly than your Dialogues; altho the best oration can only shew the clever man, while Philosophy shews the great one.

MARCUS.

I approve of the Dialogue for the reason you have given me just now; the fewness of settled truths, and the facility of turning the cycle of our thoughts to what aspect we wish, as geometers and astronomers the globes. A book was lately on the point of publication, I hear, to demonstrate the childishness of the Dialogue; and the man

upon the bench a little way below the *Middle Janus*, who had already paid the writer thirty denarii for it, gave it back to him on reading the word *childish;* for Menander or Sophocles or Euripides had caught his eye, all of whom, he perceived, wrote in dialogue, as did Homer, in the better parts of his two poems, and he doubted whether a young man ignorant of these authors could ever have heard that the same method had been employed by Plato on all occasions, and by Xenophon in much of his *Memorabilia*, and that the Conversations of Socrates would have lost their form and force, delivered in any other manner. He might perhaps have set up himself against the others; but his modesty would not let him stand before the world opposed to Socrates under the shield of Apollo. Morus, the man below the *Middle Janus**, is very liberal, and left him in possession of the thirty denarii, on condition that he should write as acrimoniously against as eloquent and judicious an author, whenever called upon.

QUINCTUS.

Various pieces of such criticism have been shewn to me. One writer says of you: *Because he*

* The *Middle Janus* is mentioned by Horace. It has usually been considered as a temple, and the remains of it are still shewn as such; but in fact it was only the *central arch* of a market-place.

was a consul, and caught a robber and strangled an assassin or two, he thinks himself a great personage... another, *He would pretend to an equality in style and wisdom with Theophrastus. We remember his late invectives, which he had the assurance to call Philippics, fancying himself another Demosthenes!* ... a third, *He knows so little of the Dialogue, that many of his speakers talk for a quarter of an hour uninterruptedly; in fact, until they can talk no longer, and have nothing more to say upon the subject.*

MARCUS.

Rare objection! as if the dialogue of statesmen and philosophers, which appertains by its nature to dissertation, should resemble the dialogue of comedians. Lelius and Scevola, Davus and Syrus! Altho I have derived my ideas of excellence from Greece, beyond which there is nothing elegant, nothing chaste and temperate, nothing not barbarous, nevertheless I have a mind of my own, equal in capacity and in order to any there, indebted as I acknowledge it to be to Grecian exercises and Grecian institutions. Neither my time of life nor my rank in it, nor indeed my temper and disposition, would allow me to twitch the sleeves of sophists, and to banter them on the idleness of their disputations, with trivial and tiny and petulant interrogatories.

I introduce grave men, and they talk gravely; important subjects, and I treat them worthily. Lighter, if my spirits had the elasticity to give them play, I should touch more delicately and finely, letting them fly off in more fantastic forms and more vapoury particles. But who indeed can hope to excell in two manners so widely different? who hath ever done it, Greek or Roman? If wiser men, than those who appear at present to have written and spoken against my dialogues, should undertake the same business, I would inform them that the most severe way of judging these works, with any plea or appearance of fairness, is, to select the best passages from the best writers I may have introduced, and to place my pages in opposition to theirs in equal quantities. Suppose me introducing Solon or Aristoteles, Phocion or Eschines, Lysias or Demosthenes; that is, whatever is most wise, whatever is most eloquent: should it appear that I have equalled, where so little space is allowed me, any one of these, I have done immensely more than has hitherto been done amongst us. Style I consider as nothing, if what it covers be unsound: wisdom in union with harmony is oracular. On this idea, the wiser of ancient days venerated in the same person the deity of oracles and of music. It must have been the most malicious and the most in-

genious of satirists, who transferred in a corrupted age the gift of eloquence to the god of thieves.

QUINCTUS.

I am not certain that you have claimed for yourself the fair trial you would have demanded for a client. One of these interlocutors may sustain a small portion of a thesis.

MARCUS.

In that case, take the whole Conversation; for one question is, the quality, the quantity, the intensity, of mental power exerted within a given space. I myself would arm my adversaries, and teach them how to fight me; and I promise you, the first blow I receive from one of them, I will cheer him heartily: it will augur well for our country. At present I can do nothing more liberal than in advancing thirty other denarii to the mortified bondsman of Morus.

I have performed one action, I have composed some few things, which posterity, I would fain believe, will not suffer to be quite forgotten. Fame, they tell you, is air: but without air, there is no life for any; without fame, there is none for the best. And yet, who knows whether all our labours and vigils may not at last be involved in oblivion! What treasures of learning must have perished, which existed long before the time of Homer! For it is utterly out of the nature of

things, that the first attempt in any art or science should be the most perfect: such is the Iliad. I look upon it as the sole fragment of a lost world. Grieved indeed I should be to think, as you have heard me say before, that an enemy might possess our city five thousand years hence: yet when I consider that soldiers of all nations are in the armies of the triumvirate, and that all are more zealous for her ruin than our citizens are for her defence, this event is not unlikely the very next. The worst of barbarism is that which arises, not from the absence of laws, but from their corruption. So long as virtue stands merely on the same level with vice, nothing is amiss; few governments in their easy decrepitude care for more: but when rectitude is dangerous and depravity secure, then eloquence and courage, the natural pride and safeguard of states, become the strongest and most active instruments in their overthrow.

QUINCTUS.

I see the servants have lighted the lamps in the house earlier than usual, hoping, I suppose, we shall retire to rest in good time, that tomorrow they may prepare the festivities for your birthday. Within how few minutes has the night closed in upon us! nothing is left discernible of the promontories, or the long irregular breakers under

them: we have before us only a faint glimmering from the shells in our path, and from the blossoms of the arbutus.

MARCUS.

The Circean hills, and the island of Parthenope, and even the white rocks of Anxur, are become undistinguishable. We leave our Cato and our Lucullus, we leave Cornelia and her children, the scenes of friendship and the recollections of greatness, for Lepidus and Octavius and Antonius; and who knows whether this birthday *, between which and us only one other day intervenes, may not be, as it certainly will be the least pleasurable, the last!

* It never came. Cicero was murdered on the nineteenth of January, the eve of his birthday, by the *holy allies* of that age; among whom however none broke his promise to the supporters of his power; none disowned the debts he had contracted to redeem himself from slavery; none sold rotten ships for sound; none employed the assassins of his father; none prostituted his daughter; none proclamed that he had no occasion for liberal and learned men; none proscribed the party by which his life was saved and his authority established; none called cowardice decent order, perfidy right reason, or cruelty true religion. Yet they were rather bad men in their day, at least the losers.

It is unnecessary that a dialogue should be historical to a day. This computation has been prevalent among the learned. According to Middleton, Cicero was born on the third of January, and was murdered on the seventh of December.

Death has two aspects: dreary and sorrowful to those of prosperous, mild and almost genial to those of adverse fortune. Her countenance is old to the young, and youthful to the aged: to the former her voice is importunate, her gait terrific: the latter she approaches like a bedside friend, and calls in a whisper that invites to rest. To us, my Quinctus, advanced as we are on our way, weary from its perplexities and dizzy from its precipices, she gives a calm welcome . . . let her receive a cordial one.

If life is a present, which any one, foreknowing its contents, would have willingly declined, does it not follow that any one would as willingly give it up, having well tried what they are? I speak of the wise and reasonable, the firm and virtuous; not of those who, like bad governors, are afraid of laying down the powers and privileges they have been proved unworthy of holding. Were it certain that, the longer we live, the wiser we become and the happier, then indeed a long life would be desirable: but since on the contrary our mental strength decays, and our enjoyments of every kind not only sink and cease, but diseases and sorrows come in place of them, if any wish is wise, it is surely the wish that we should go away, unshaken by years, undeprest by griefs, and undespoiled of our better faculties. Life and death appear

more certainly ours than whatsoever else: and yet hardly can that be called so, which comes without our knowledge, and goes without it; or that which we cannot put aside if we would, and indeed can anticipate but little. The former there are few who can regulate in any way, none who can order what it shall receive or exclude. What value then should be placed upon it by the wise, when duty or necessity calls him away? or what reluctance should he feel on passing into a state, where at least he must be conscious of fewer checks and inabilities? Such, my brother, as the brave commander, when from the secret and dark passages of some fortress, wherin implacable enemies besieged him, having performed all his duties and exhausted all his munition, he issues at a distance into open day.

Every thing has its use; life to teach us the contempt of death, and death the contempt of life. Glory, which among all things between stands eminently the principal object, altho it has been considered by some philosophers as mere vanity and deception, moves those great intellects which nothing else could have stirred, and places them where they can best and most advantageously serve the commonwealth. Glory can be safely despised by those only who have fairly won it: a low, ignorant, or vicious man should dispute on other topics.

The philosopher who contemns it, has every rogue in his sect, and may reckon that it will outlive all others. Occasion may have been wanting to some; I grant it: they may have remained their whole lifetime, like dials in the shade, always fit for use and always useless: but this must occurr either in monarchal governments, or where persons occupy the first stations who ought hardly to have been admitted to the secondary, and whom Jealousy has guided more frequently than Justice.

It is true there is much inequality, much inconsiderateness, in the distribution of fame. The principles according to which honour ought to be conferred, are not only violated, but often inverted. Whoever wishes to be thought great among men, must do them some great mischief. The longer he continues in doing things of this sort, the more he will be admired. The features of Fortune are so like those of Genius as to be mistaken by almost all the world. We whose names and works are honorable to our country, and destined to survive her, are less esteemed than those who have accelerated her decay: yet even here the sense of injury rises from and is accompanied by a sense of merit, the tone of which is deeper and predominant.

When we have spoken of life, death, and glory, we have spoken of all important things, except

friendship: for eloquence and philosophy, and other inferior attainments, are either means conducible to life and glory, or antidotes against the bitterness of death. We cannot conquer fate and necessity, but we can yield to them in such a manner as to be greater than if we could. I have observed your impatience: you were about to appeal in favour of virtue: but virtue is included in friendship, as I have mentioned in my Lelius; nor have I ever separated it from philosophy or from glory. On friendship, in the present condition of our affairs, I would say little. Could I begin my existence again, and, what is equally impossible, could I see before me all I have seen, I would choose few acquaintances, fewer friendships, no familiarities. This rubbish, for such it generally is, collecting at the base of an elevated mind, lessens its highth and impairs its character. What requires to be sustained, if it is greater, falls; if it is smaller, is lost to view by the intervention of its supporters*.

* These are the ideas of a man deceived and betrayed by almost every one he trusted. But if Cicero had considered, as I have often done, that there never was an elevated soul or warm heart since the creation of the world, which has not been ungenerously and unjustly dealt with, and that ingratitude has usually been in a fair proportion to desert, his vanity if not his philosophy would have buoyed up and supported

In literature great men suffer more from their little friends than from their potent enemies. It is not by our adversaries that our early shoots of glory are nipt and broken off, or our later pestilentially blighted; it is by those who lie at our feet, and look up to us with a solicitous and fixt regard, until our shadow grows thicker and makes them colder*. Then they begin to praise

him. He himself is the most remarkably rich and redundant in such instances. To set Pompeius aside, as a man ungrateful to all, he had spared Julius Cesar in his consulate, when, according to the suspicions of History, he was implicated in the conspiracy of Catiline. Clodius, Lepidus, and Antonius, had been admitted to his friendship and confidence: Octavius owed to him his popularity and estimation: Philologus†, whom he had fed and instructed, pointed out to his murderers the secret path he had taken to avoid them: and Popilius, their leader, had by his eloquence been saved from the punishment of one parricide that he might committ another.

* I wish Cicero had been so sincere in his friendship as perhaps he thought he was. The worst action of his life may be related in his own words. Qualis futura sit Cæsaris Vituperatio contra Laudationem meam perspexi ex eo libro quem Hirtius ad me misit, in quo colligit vitia Catonis, sed cum maximis laudibus meis. itaque misi librum ad Muscam, ut tuis librariis daret, *volo enim eum divulgari*. Ad Attic.

† So his name is written by Plutarch, who calls him Ἀπολλόφανος Κοΐντου. But I doubt whether it should not be Philogonus. A freedman of Quinctus with that name is mentioned in the Epistles (ad Q. F. 1. 3). Middleton omits the story.

us as worthy men indeed and good citizens, but as rather vain, and what (to speak the truth) in others they should call presumptuous. They entertain no doubt of our merit in literature; but justice forces them to declare, that several have risen up lately who promise to surpass us. Should it be asked of them who these are, they look modest, and tell you softly and submissively, it would ill become them to repeat the eulogies of their acquaintance, and that no man pronounces his own name so distinctly as another's. I had something of oratory once about me, and was borne on high by the spirit of the better Greeks. Thus they thought of me; and they thought of me, Quinctus, no more than thus: they had reached the straits, and saw before them the boundary, the impassable Atlantic of the intellectual world. But now I am a bad citizen, and a worse writer: I want the exercise and effusion of my own breath to warm me: I must be chafed by an adversary: I must be supported by a crowd: I require the forum, the rostra, the senate: in my individuality I am nothing.

QUINCTUS.

I remember the time when, instead of smiling,

xii. 40. An honest man would be little gratified by the divulgation of his praises accompanied by calumnies on his friend, or even by the exposure of his faults and weaknesses.

you would have been offended and angry at such levity and impudence.

MARCUS.

The misfortunes of our country cover ours. I am imperceptible to myself in the dark gulph that is absorbing her. Should I be angry? anger, always irrational, is most so here. These men see those above them as they see the stars: one is almost as large as another, almost as bright; small distance between them: they cannot quite touch us with the forefinger; but they can almost... and what matters it! they can utter as many things against us, and as fiercely, as Polyphemus did against the heavens. Since my dialogues are certainly the last things I shall compose, and since we, my brother, shall perhaps, for the little time that is remaining of our lives, be soon divided, we may talk about such matters both as among the wisest and as among the most interesting: and the rather so if there is somewhat in them displaying the character of our country and the phasis of our times.

Aquilius Cimber, who lives somewhere under the Alps, was patronized by Caius Cesar for his assiduities, and by Antonius for his admirable talent in telling a story and sitting up late. He bears on his shoulders the whole tablet of his

nation, reconciling all its incongruities. Apparently very frank, but intrinsically very insincere; a warm friend while drinking; cold, vapid, limber, on the morrow, as the festal coronet he had worne the night before.

QUINCTUS.

Such a person, I can well suppose, may nevertheless have acquired the friendship of Antonius.

MARCUS.

His popularity in those parts rendered him also an object of attention to Octavius, who told me that he was prodigiously charmed with his stories of departed spirits, which Aquilius firmly believes. are not altogether departed from his country. He hath several old books, relating to the history, true and fabulous, of the earlier Cimbri. Such is the impression they made upon him in his youth, he soon composed others on the same model, and better (I have heard) than the originals. His opinion is now much regarded in his province on matters of literature in general; altho you would as soon think of sending for a smith to select an ostrich feather at the milliner's. He neglects no means of money-getting, and has entered into an association for this purpose with the booksellers of the principal Transpadane cities. On the first appearance of my dialogues, he, not

having redd them, nor having heard of their political tendency, praised them; moderately indeed and reservedly; but finding the people in power ready to persecute and oppress me, he sent his excuse to Antonius, that he was drunk when he did it; and to Octavius, that the fiercest of the Lemures held him by the throat until he had written what his heart revolted at: and he ordered his friends and relatives to excuse him by one or other of these apologies, according to the temper and credulity of the person they addressed.

QUINCTUS.

I never heard this story of Aquilius.. no less amusing than the well-known one of him, that he went several miles out of his road, to visit the tomb of the Scipios, only to lift up his tunic against it in contempt: he boasted of the feat and of the motive.

MARCUS.

Until the worthies of our times shone forth, he venerated no Roman since the exiled kings, in which his favorite is the son of the last: and there are certain men in too high authority, who assure him they know how to appreciate and compensate so heroic and sublime an affection. The Catos and Brutusses are wretches with him, and particularly since Cato pardoned him, for

having hired a fellow (as was proved) to turn some swine into his turnip-field at Tusculum. Looking at him, or hearing of him, unless from those who know his real character, you would imagine him generous, self-dependent, self-devoted: but this upright and staunch thistle bears a yielding and palpable down for adulation.

QUINCTUS.

Better *that* than malice. Whatever he may think or say of you, I hope he never speaks maliciously of those whose livelihood, like his own, depends upon their writings; the studious, the enthusiastic, the unhardened in politics, the uncrost in literature.

MARCUS.

I wish I could confirm or encourage you in your hopes: report, as it reaches me, by no means favours them.

QUINCTUS.

This hurts me; for Aquilius, altho the Graces in none of their attributions are benignant to him, is a man of industry and genius.

MARCUS.

Alas, Quinctus! to pass Aquilius by, as not concerned in the reflexion, the noblest elevations of the human mind have in appertenance their sands and swamps; hardness at top, putridity at

bottom. Friends themselves, and not only the little ones you have spoken of, not only the thoughtless and injudicious, but graver and more constant, will occasionally gratify a superficial feeling, which soon grows deeper, by irritating an orator or writer.

QUINCTUS.

You remember the apologue of Critobulus.

MARCUS.

No, I do not.

QUINCTUS.

It was sent to me by Pomponius Atticus, soon after my marriage: I must surely have shewn it to you.

MARCUS.

Not you indeed; and I should wonder that so valuable a present, so rare an accession to Rome as any new Greek volume, could have come into your hands, and not out of them to mine, if you had not mentioned that it was about the time of your nuptials; a season which shakes many good things out of the head, and leaves many bad ones in it. Let me hear the story.

QUINCTUS.

I was wandering, says Critobulus, in the midst of a forest, and came suddenly to a small round fountain, or pool, with several white flowers (I remember) and broad leaves in the center of it,

but clear of them at the sides, and of a water the most pellucid. Suddenly a very beautiful figure came from behind me, and stood between me and the fountain. I was amazed. I could not distinguish the sex, the form being youthful and the face toward the water, on which it was gazing and bending over its reflexion, like another Hylas or Narcissus. It then stooped and adorned itself with a few of the simplest flowers, and seemed the fonder and tenderer of those which had borne the impression of its graceful feet: and having done so, it turned round and looked upon me with an air of indifference and unconcern. The longer I fixed my eyes on her, for I now perceived it was a female, the more ardent I became and the more embarrassed. She perceived it, and smiled. I would have taken her hand. *You shall presently*, said she; and never fell on mortal a diviner glance than on me from her. I told her so. *You speak well*, said she. I then fancied that she was simple and weak and fond of flattery, and began to flatter her. She turned her face away from me, and answered nothing. I declared my excessive love: she went some paces off. I swore that it was impossible for one who had ever seen her to live without her: she went several paces further. *By the immortal gods!* I cried, *you shall not*

leave me. She turned round and looked benignly; but shook her head. *You are another's then! say it! say it plainly from your lips.. and let me die.* She smiled, more melancholy than before, and replied, *O Critobulus! I am indeed another's; I am a God's.* The air of the interior heavens seemed to pierce me as she uttered it; and I trembled as impassioned men may tremble once. After a pause, *I might have thought it!* cried I.. *why then come before me and torment me.* She began to play and trifle with me, as became her age (I thought) rather than her engagement, and she placed my hand upon the flowers in her lap without a blush. The whole fountain would not at that moment have assuaged my thirst. The sounds of the breezes and of the birds around us, even the sounds of her own voice, were all confounded in my ear, as colours are in the fulness and intensity of light. She said many pleasing things to me, to the earlier and greater part of which I was insensible; but in the midst of those which I could hear, and was listening to attentively, she began to pluck out the grey hairs from my head, and to tell me that the others too were of a colour not very agreeable. My heart sank within me. Presently there was hardly a limb or feature without its imperfection. *O!* cried I in despair, *you have*

been used to the Gods: you must think so: but among men I do not believe I am considered as ill-made or ugly. She paid little attention to my words or my vexation; and when she had gone on with my defects for some time longer, in the same calm tone and with the same sweet countenance, she began to declare that she had much affection for me, and was desirous of inspiring it in return. I was about to answer her with raptures, when on a sudden, in her girlish humour, she stuck a thorn, with which she had been playing, into that part of the body which supports the rest when we are sitting. I know not whether it went deeper than she intended, but catching at it, I leaped up in shame and anger, and at this same moment felt something rough upon my shoulder. It was an armlet, inscribed with letters of bossy adamant, *Jove to his daughter Truth.*

She stood again before me at some distance, and said gracefully, *Critobulus, I am too young and simple for you; but you will love me still, and not be made unhappy by it in the end. Farewell.*

I contemplate with satisfaction the efforts I have made to serve my country: but the same eloquence, the merit of which not even the most

barbarous of my adversaries can detract from me, would have enabled me to elucidate large fields of philosophy, hitherto untrodden by our countrymen, and in which the Greeks have wandered widely or worked unprofitably.

QUINCTUS.

Excuse my interruption. I heard a few days ago a pleasant thing reported of Asinius Pollio. He said at supper, your language is that of an Allobrox.

MARCUS.

After supper, I should rather think, and with Antonius. Asinius, urged by the strength of instinct, picks from amidst the freshest herbage the dead and dry stalk, and doses and dreams about it where he cannot find it...Acquired, it is true, I have a certain portion of my knowledge, and consequently of my language, from the Allobroges: I cannot well point out the place; the walls of Romulus, the habitations of Janus and of Saturn, and the temple of Capitoline Jove, which the confessions I extorted from their ambassadors gave me in my consulate the means of saving, stand at too great a distance from this terrace.

QUINCTUS.

Certainly you have much to look back upon, of what is most proper and efficacious to console

and elevate you: but to leave behind us our children, if indeed they will be permitted to stay behind, is painful.

MARCUS.

Among all the contingencies of life, it is that for which we ought to be the best prepared, as the most regular and ordinary in the course of nature. We bequeathe to ours a field illuminated by our glory and enriched by our example: a noble patrimony, and beyond the jurisdiction of Pretor or proscriber. Nor indeed is our fall itself without its fruit to them: for violence is the cause why that is often called a calamity which is not so, and repairs in some measure its injuries by exciting to commiseration and tenderness. The pleasure a man receives from his children resembles that which with more propriety than any other we may attribute to the Divinity: for to suppose that his chief satisfaction and delight should arise from the contemplation of what he has done or can do, is to place him on a level with a runner or a wrestler. The formation of a world, or of a thousand worlds, is as easy to him as the formation of an atom. Virtue and intellect are equally his production; but he subjects them in no slight degree to our volition. His benevolence is gratified at seeing us conquer our wills and rise

superior to our infirmities; and at tracing day after day a nearer resemblance in our moral features to his. We can derive no pleasure but from exertion: he can derive none from it; since exertion, as we understand the word, is incompatible with omnipotence.

QUINCTUS.

Procede, my brother. In every depression of mind, in every excitement of feeling, my spirits are equalized by your discourse; and that which you said with rather too much brevity of our children, soothes me greatly.

MARCUS.

I am persuaded of the truth in what I have spoken. And yet... ah Quinctus! there is a tear that Philosophy cannot dry, and a pang that will rise as we approach the Gods.

There are two things which tend beyond all others, after divine philosophy, to inhibit and check our ruder passions, as they grow and swell in us, and to keep our gentler in their proper play: and these two things are, the moderate indulgence of every seasonable sorrow and of every inoffensive pleasure. Nay, there is also a pleasure, humble, it is true, but graceful and insinuating, which follows close upon our very sorrows, reconciles us to them gradually, and sometimes renders

us at last undesirous altogether of abandoning them. If ever you have remembered the anniversary of some day, wheron a dear friend was lost to you, or seen to suffer, tell me whether that anniversary day was not purer and even calmer than the day before. The sorrow, if there should be any left, is soon absorbed, and full satisfaction takes place of it, while you perform a pious office to Friendship, required and appointed by the ordinances of Nature. When my Tulliola was torne away from me, a thousand plans presented themselves tumultuously or successively, for immortalizing her memory, and raising a monument up to the magnitude of my grief. The grief itself has done it: the tears I then shedd over her assuaged it in me, and did every thing that could be done for her, or hoped, or wished. I called upon Tulliola: Rome, and the whole world, heard me: her glory was a part of mine and mine of hers; and when Eternity had received her at my hands, I wept no longer. The tenderness wherewith I mentioned and now mention her, tho it suspends my voice, brings what consoles and comforts me: it is the milk and honey left at the sepulcher, and equally sweet (I hope) to the departed.

The Gods, who have given us our affections, permitt us surely the uses and the signs of them.

Immoderate grief, like every thing else immoderate, is useless and pernicious; but if we did not tolerate, and endure it, if we did not prepare for it, meet it, commune with it, if we did not even cherish it in its season, much of what is best in our faculties, much of our tenderness, much of our generosity, much of our patriotism, much also of our genius, would be stifled and extinguished.

When I hear any one call upon another to be manly and to restrain his tears, if they flow from the social and the kind affections, I doubt the humanity and distrust the wisdom of the counseler. If he were humane, he would be more inclined to pity and to sympathize, than to lecture and to reprove; and if he were wise, he would consider that tears are given us by nature as a remedy to affliction, altho, like other remedies, they should come to our relief in private. Philosophy, we may be told, would prevent the tears by turning away the sources of them, and by raising up a rampart against pain and sorrow. I am of opinion that Philosophy, quite pure and totally abstracted from our appetites and passions, instead of serving us the better for being so, would do us little or no good at all. We may receive so much light as not to see, and so much philosophy as to be worse than foolish.

My eloquence, whatever (with Pollio's leave) it may be, would at least have sufficed me to explore these tracts of philosophy, which the Greeks, as I said, either have seldom coasted or have left unsettled. Altho I think I have done somewhat more than they have, I am often dissatisfied with the scantiness of my stores and the limits of my excursions. Every question has given me the subject of a new one; the last has always been better than the preceding, and, like Archimedes, whose tomb appears now before me, as when I first discovered it at Syracuse, I could almost ask of my enemy time to solve my problem.

Quinctus! Quinctus! let us exult with joy: there is no enemy to be appeased or avoided. We are moving forward, and without exertion, thither where we shall know all we wish to know, and how greatly more than, whether in Tusculum or in Formiæ, in Rome or in Athens, we could ever hope to learn!

Some of the opinions attributed to Cicero in this dialogue, and particularly those on the agrarian law, are at variance with what he has expressed, not only in his orations, but also in his three books *De Officiis*, which he appears to have written under a strong fear, that either this or something

similar would deprive him of his possessions. Hence he speaks of the Gracchi with an asperity which no historian has countenanced, and of Agis, the most virtuous king on record, without a word of commendation or of pity. When however he perceived that in the midst of dangers his property was untouched, it must have occurred to so sagacious a reasoner, that, if an agrarian law had been enacted, the first triumvirate could never have existed, and that he himself had remained, as he ought to have been, the leader of the commonwealth. It is to be lamented, but it is also to be pardoned in him, that with such feelings he should have mentioned Crassus as a man whom he did not hate, and should have spoken of Cesar thus: Tanta in eo peccandi libido fuit, ut hoc ipsum eum delectaret, peccare. Yet Cesar after the battle of Pharsalia did evil from necessity, good from choice; and then as little evil as was possible, and more good than was politic. Of Crassus, whom he *did not hate*, he says... Qui videt domi tuæ pariter accusatorum atque judicum consociatos greges; qui nocentes et pecuniosos reos eodem te auctore corruptelam judicii molientes; qui tuas mercedum pactiones in patrociniis, intercessiones pecuniarum in coitionibus candidatorum, dimissiones libertorum ad fœnerandas diripiendasque provincias; qui expulsiones vicinorum; qui latrocinia in agris; qui cum servis, cum libertis, cum clientibus societates; qui possessiones vacuas; qui proscriptiones locupletum; qui cædes municipiorum; qui illàm Sullani temporis messem recordetur; qui testamenta subjecta, qui sublatos tot homines, qui denique omnia venalia; delectum decretum, alienam, suam sententiam, forum, domum, vocem, silentium. Parad. VI.

The description of such a state is sufficient to recommend its abolition. He illustrates it further. Desitum est videri quidquam in socios iniquum, cum extitisset etiam in cives tanta

crudelitas ... Multa præterea commemorarem nefaria in socios, si hoc uno sol quidquam vidisset indignius ... Optimatibus tuis nihil confido. Sed video nullam esse rempublicam, nullum senatum, nulla judicia, nullam in ullo nostrûm dignitatem ... Jure igitur plectimur: nisi enim multorum impunita scelera tulissemus, &c.... Non igitur utilis illa L. Philippi Q. filii sententia, quas civitates L. Sulla *pecuniâ acceptâ* ex SC. liberavisset, ut hæ rursus vectigales essent, neque his pecuniam quam pro libertate dedissent redderemus: turpe imperio! piratarum enim melior fides quam senatûs. It follows then, à fortiori, that if pirates should be destroyed, the senate should.

Cicero never entertained long together the same opinion of Pompeius: a little before the death of Clodius he writes thus: Pompeius, *nostri amores*, quod mihi summo dolori est, ipse se afflixit. Soon after thus: Pompeius a me valde contendit de reditu in gratiam; sed adhuc nihil profecit, nec, si ullam partem libertatis tenebo, proficiet. He speaks of him to Atticus as follows: Non mihi satis idonei sunt auctores ii qui a te probantur; quod enim unquam in republicâ forte factum extitit? aut quis ab iis ullam rem laude dignam desiderat? nec mehercule laudandos existimo qui trans mare belli parandi causâ profecti sunt ... Quis autem est tantâ quidem de re quin variè secum ipse disputet? Simul et elicere cupio sententiam tuam; si manet, ut firmior sim, si mutata est, ut tibi assentiar ... The character and designs of Pompeius and his *legitimates* are developed thus. Mirandum in modum Cneius noster Sullani regni similitudinem concupivit. Consilium est suffocare urbem et Italiam fame; deinde agros vastare, urere. Promitto tibi, si valebit, tegulam illum in Italiâ nullam relicturum. Mene igitur socio? contra mehercule meum judicium, et contra omnium antiquorum auctoritatem ... Quæ minæ municipiis! quæ nominatim viris bonis! quæ denique omnibus

qui remansissent ! quàm crebrò illud, *Sulla potuit, ego non potero.*

The conduct of the Gracchi was approved by the wisest and most honest of their contemporaries. Lelius, the friend of Scipio, desisted from his support of Tiberius, only when, as Plutarch says, he was compelled by the apprehension of *greater evil.* But surely a man so prudent as Lelius must have foreseen all the consequences, and have known the good or the evil of them, and would not have desisted when, the matter having been agitated, and the measure agreed on, every danger was over from taking it, and the only one that could arise was from its rejection, after that the hopes and expectations of the people had been stimulated and excited. Hence I am induced to believe that Scipio, in compliance with the wishes of the senate, persuaded his friend to desist from the undertaking. Cicero, in mentioning it, expresses himself in these words... Duo sapientissimos et clarissimos fratres, Publium Crassum et Publium Scævolam, aiunt Tiberio Graccho *auctores legum* fuisse, alterum quidem, ut videmus, palam, alterum, ut suspicamur, obscurius. Acad. Quæst. iv. Mutianus Crassus, the brother of Publius, and Appius Claudius, were also his supporters. It is beyond all doubt that he was both politic and equitable in his plan of dividing among the poorer citizens, whose debts had been incurred by services rendered to their country, the lands retained by the rich, in violation of the Licinian law. He was called unjust toward the inhabitants of Latium and the allies, in proposing to deprive them of that which the Romans had given them, but instead of which, to indemnify themselves for the grant, they had imposed a tribute. Gracchus wished to allay the irritation of the people, and to render them inoffensive to the state, by giving them useful

occupations in the cares and concerns of property. The Latins and allies would have been indemnified: for the tax imposed on them would have been removed, and the freedom of the city granted to them. The senate would perhaps have been somewhat less hostile to Gracchus, if he had not also proposed that the money left by Attalus to the Roman people should go to its destination. They were stimulated, if not by interest, by power, to invoke the assistence of Scipio against the popular party; and he was conducted home by them the day before his death; which appears rather to have been hastened by the fears and jealousy of the senate, than by the revenge of the opposition, none of whom at that time could have had access to him, his house being filled and surrounded by their enemies. The senate had reasons for suspicion of Scipio. They dreaded the dictatorial power which was about to be conferred on him, in order that he might settle the commonwealth: they were dissatisfied at the doubts he entertained of any guilt in Gracchus, of whom he declared his opinion that he was justly slain if he had attempted to possess the supreme power: which expression proves that he doubted, or rather that he disbelieved it, and is equivalent to the declaration that he did not deserve death for any other of his actions or intentions. They also clearly saw that a man of his equity and firmness would not leave unpunished those who had instigated Popilius Lenas, Opimius, and Metellus, to their cruelties against the partisans of Gracchus. Opimius alone had put to death by a *judicial process* no fewer than three thousand Roman citizens, whose only crime was that of demanding what had been left them by Attalus, and promised them by the legitimate rulers of the state.

Since the composition of my Dialogue, I have read the

newly found treatise of Cicero, *De Re Publicâ*. It induces me to alter nothing of what I had written, but, on the contrary, supplies me with a few more sentences of illustration from him, and subjects of remark. It is amusing to see with what eagerness a sentence that leans toward kingship is seized by the editor. He exclames, *Notabile Ciceronis dictum de* monarchiæ præstantiâ! *quam in sententiam plerique seu* veteres *seu recentiores politici pedibus eunt.* The sentence is, Nam ipsum regale genus civitatis non modo non est reprehendendum, sed haud scio an reliquis *simplicibus* longe anteponendum, si ullum probarem simplex reipublicæ genus: sed ita quoad statum suum retinet; is est autem status, ut unius perpetuâ potestate et justitiâ, omnique sapientiâ, regatur salus et æquabilitas et otium civium. Certainly, if a king were perfectly just and perfectly wise, his government would be preferable to any other; but it is childish to speculate on any such occurrence, with the experience of ages before us, leading us to so different a conclusion. Scipio speaks of a republic with a king presiding over it; the editor talks of *monarchy*, as we understand the word. Scipio adds, Desunt omnino ei populo multa qui sub rege est, in primis libertas, *quæ non in eo est ut justo utamur domino, sed ut nullo.* Can any thing be more temperate and rational than these expressions? the first of which designate only the utility of the *form*, and that conditionally, and the last give an excellent reason why even the form itself should not be admitted, proving the utility of the form to be incomparably less than what must be given up for it. In going on, he praises L. Brutus, vir ingenio et virtute præstans, &c. primusque in hac civitate docuit in conservandâ civium libertate esse privatum neminem. This the editor calls *immanem*

injustamque sententiam! Yet Cicero in his own person uses nearly the same words in an epistle of the younger Brutus. (Epist. x. ad Familiares.) Nullo publico consilio rempublicam liberâsti, quo etiam est illa res major et clarior. The same opinion is also given by him in the Tusculan Questions. Nunquam privatum esse sapientem, &c. (iv.) Scipio, in commending the advantages that, under conditions quite problematical, may attend the government of one chief magistrate, adds, *Sed tamen inclinatum et quasi pronum ad* perniciosissimum *statum:* and afterwards, Quis enim hunc hominem rite dixerit, qui sibi cum suis civibus, qui denique cum omni hominum genere nullam juris communionem, nullam humanitatis societatem velit?

The education of kings leaves few either wise or honest. The better citizens receive the better education: they are mutual checks one upon another, while kings are mutual guards and fosterers of each other's tyranny. That in fact, whatever it be, is the best form of government, which the most effectually excludes the wicked and unwise, and the most readily admits the wise and virtuous: the two worst are ochlocracy and despotism, both for the same reason: in both there is *vis consilii expers*. Ochlocracy is the more tolerable as being the more transient; one always passes into the other, as its first step. Scipio argues weakly, and Cicero perhaps intends that he should do so, in saying, Illud tamen non adsentior tibi, præstare regi optimates: *si enim* sapientia est quæ gubernat rem publicam, quid tandem interest hæc in uno-ne sit an in pluribus? Here is a *petitio principii* which on no account can be granted. It is surely more probable that wisdom should reside among many, and those the best educated and of mature age, than with one

only, and him the worst educated, often of age not mature, and more often bearing thick upon him throughout life the vices of youth and the inconsiderateness of childhood. If Cicero spoke sincerely, he was both foolish and flagitious in praising those who slew Cesar: for never was there a man so capable of governing alone and well. I will not believe that he was led astray by Plato, who asserts in his fourth book that it is of little consequence whether a state be governed by many or one, if that one is obedient to the laws. Surely a king can more easily find those who will assist him in subverting them than simple citizens can, and is usually more inclined to do it, and is more easily persuaded that it is his interest. Aristoteles, as usual, speaks less idly: what is remarkable is, that his opinion squares perfectly with the Epicurean doctrine. Τέλος μὲν οὖν πόλεως τὸ εὖ ζῆν· τοῦτο δ' ἔστι τὸ ζῆν εὐδαιμόνως καὶ καλῶς. Now this is impossible under men worse and less wise (as hath been the case nine hundred and thirty years in the thousand) than those who occupy the middle ranks in life, to say nothing of those who are uncontaminated by their example and undebased by their tyranny; such men as would exist if *they* did not. Governments, after all, must be constituted according to the habits and propensities of the governed, in which the moral springs from the physical. The Arab must always be free, the Frenchman never: in the Spaniard there still exists what might be expected from the union of Saracen and Goth; in the Englishman, from that of Norman and Saxon. The Greek retains, and displays magnificently, his ancient character: combinations of various kinds militate against the Roman. All traces of ancient institutions have been effaced for ages, excepting in religion. The Roman people was merely the people of one city; its physical peculiarities could not extend themselves,

and were entirely lost in a succession of conquerors. But the voice of History refutes the conclusion, which certain writers would draw from the celebrated treatise of Cicero, and teaches us that the republican form of government was best adapted to the nation, and that under it the Romans were virtuous and powerful, to a degree which they never attained under kings and emperors. Their seven kings, after two centuries, left a dominion less extensive than an English county or an American estate: in the same number of years, under a republic, the same people, if subjects and citizens may be called so, conquered nearly the whole known world: whatever was wealthy, whatever was powerful, whatever was tyrannical and despotic, fell down before them, or followed in dejection their triumphal cars.

We have seen what their kings did: let us now see what the wisest and powerfullest of their emperors could do.

Augustus lost his army in Germany, and commemorated by a trophy the capture of a few castles on the Alps: so greatly and so suddenly had fallen the glory of Rome, altho ruled by a sagacious prince, when the discretion of one was substituted for the counsels and interests and energies of many.

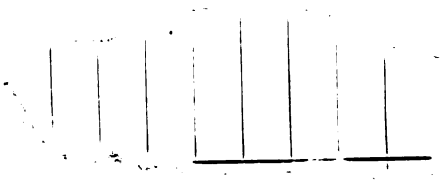
It has been the fashion, and not only of late years, but for ages, to represent the Roman form of government as aristocratical: this is erroneous: Cicero himself says, nihil sacrosanctum esse potest, nisi quod plebs populusve *jusserit*. The people chose all the great functionaries, excepting the interrex: he appointed the dictator, who is falsely thought to have possessed absolute power, even during the short period for which he was created. When Fabius Maximus would have punished Minutius, the tribunes interposed their authority. The senatorial formula, *Videant Consules ne quid detrimenti capiat Res Publica*, has misled many, and indeed misled even

Cicero himself, who offended against the forms of law when he saved the commonwealth from Catilina. The supreme power was never legally in the consuls, but constantly in the tribunes of the people; so that Sigonius is wrong in his assertion, *Consules ab omnibus magistratibus concionem avocare potuisse, ab iis neminem.* Nothing is more common than the interference of the tribunes against the consuls. T. Livius (l. xliv.) relates that the effects of Tiberius Gracchus the elder, who had been consul and censor, were *consecrated* (which in arbitrary governments is called *confiscated*) because he had disobeyed an order of the tribune L. Flavius; a tribune committed to prison the consul Metellus; the censor Appius was punished in the same manner by the same tribunitian authority. Carbo, who had been thrice consul, was condemned to death by Pompey from the tribunitian chair. Drusus, as tribune, sent the consul Philippus to prison with a halter round his neck, *obtritâ gulâ* (Florus, clv.). One Vectius was slain for not rising up before the tribune. Arrogantly and unjustly as the tribunitian power in this instance was applied, it was constitutionally. Plutarch relates part of a speech by Tiberius Gracchus, in which the authority is mentioned as a thing settled. "It is hard," he says, "if a consul may be thrown into prison by a tribune, and a tribune cannot be removed from office by the people."

With all these facts (I must believe it) in his memory, Cicero still would consider the legitimate government of Rome as an aristocracy; for otherwise how could he himself be aristocratical, which he avows he was? He wrote his treatise *De Republicâ* ten years before his death, when the greater and more costly part of his experience was wanting. In the dialogue he is represented as on the verge of a political world,

of which he had been the mover and protector, while the elements of it announce to him that it is bursting under his feet.

He is hardly to be called inconsistent, who, guided by the experience of recent facts, turns at last to wiser sentiments, opposite as they may be to those he entertained the greater part of his life. If any one shall assert that I attribute to Cicero an inconsistency unwarranted by his writings, my answer is, that there is manifestly a much greater between the facts he states in these quotations, and the conclusions he appears by his line of policy to have drawn from them; and that, taking his own statement, I do no injustice to his discernment and ratiocination, in bringing home to him a new inference. Whatever be the defects and weaknesses of this memorable and truly glorious man, I disclose them with feelings far different from exultation: I mention them hesitatingly, reluctantly, and with awe: for in comparison with the meanest, the most negligent of his productions, how inelegant, rude, and barbarous, is the most elaborate composition, the most applauded eloquence of our times!

END OF VOL. II.

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